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DO PARENTS MATTER? A STUDY OF PARENTAL INFLUENCE ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S SEXUALITY IN A LOW-INCOME COMMUNITY OF BRAZIL

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Abstract

The rise of unintended pregnancies and transmission of STIs and HIV/AIDS among young people is a growing public health problem in Brazil. To design effective interventions, it is necessary to understand the sources that affect their sexuality. Research in developed countries suggests that parents are an important influence. Whether this is also the case in Brazil however, remains unknown as previous studies have largely ignored this question. This study aimed to explore parental influence on the sexual knowledge, attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour of young men and women in a low-income community of Brazil. Parental influence was investigated by focusing on eight factors: verbal sexual communication; parental sexual attitudes; quality of relationship with parents; parental control and other measures of non-verbal communication that have seldom been researched. 1077 young people aged 13-24 from two secondary schools completed a survey questionnaire and 8 focus groups and 138 in-depth interviews were held with young people and parents. Of the 8 parental factors investigated, 5 were related to one or more of the sexuality outcomes: Verbal sexual communication was related to all four outcomes; parental sexual attitudes to young people's own attitudes and the timing of first sex of males; quality of relationship with parents to the attitudes of females and timing of first sex of males; parental control to the sexual knowledge and condom use of young men and the timing of first sex of young women; father's non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scenes on TV was related to the attitudes of both genders and condom use of males. Similar patterns of influence also emerged from the in-depth interviews as did information about how the influences may operate. The results indicate that in the context studied, parents influence young people's sexuality and should be included in future interventions.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Dr. Zenete Peixoto França, my father, Mr. Tarcísio José França and my step-father, Mr. Stephen Parker.

Thank you for the parental influence you have had in my life.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

At the 'International Conference on Population and Development' (ICPD) in Cairo, 1994, it was concluded that the reproductive and sexual health needs of young people¹ have largely been ignored and should become a priority for research and intervention in the future. Young people around the world are becoming sexually active at increasingly younger ages, marrying later and are more likely to have multiple partners (FHI, 2002). This has resulted in an increase of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) among young people and of unintended pregnancies among young women (Population Reports, 1995; UNAIDS, 2002a). It has been estimated that over half of all HIV infections have occurred in people below the age of 25 (UNAIDS, 2002a; UNAIDS, 2004). There are nearly 12 million young people aged 15 to 24 in the world who are living with HIV/AIDS. Every day, an additional 6000 young people are infected, or approximately one every 15 seconds (UNAIDS, 2002a; UNAIDS, 2004). Also, early motherhood has a much higher than average risk of maternal death and morbidity (UN, 2004). There is also a higher rate of infant mortality and morbidity among children of young mothers (Singh, 1998). Young motherhood can severely reduce educational and employment opportunities and is likely to have a long term, adverse impact on the mothers' and their children's quality of life (FHI, 2002). In general, young people's reproductive and sexual health has become a major area of concern for both developed and developing countries due to its health, social, economic and psychological consequences.

1.1 Young People's Reproductive Health in Brazil

Brazil is the most populated country in South America, with the population estimated at approximately 174.5 million people (World Bank, 2003). The

¹ In this thesis, the terms young people, young men, young women and youth are used interchangeably to refer to the age group 10-24, when not specified.

growth rate of the population from 1995 to 2000 was 1.3 per cent (UNAIDS, 2002b) and the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) was 2.1 (World Bank, 2003). Eighty-two percent of the population live in urban areas. Brazil has the tenth largest economy in the world, with a GNI per capita of US\$2,830. Nevertheless, 22 percent of the Brazilian population are estimated to live below the poverty line (i.e. on less than \$1 per person per day) (World Bank, 2003). Life expectancy at birth is 69 years and the total adult literacy rate for both men and women is 84 percent (UNAIDS, 2002b). The maternal mortality rate is 260 per 100,000 live births and the infant mortality rate is 33 per 1,000 live births (World Bank, 2003).

In Brazil, the reproductive health of young people is of concern as elsewhere. There are approximately 49 million youth between the ages of 10-24 in Brazil (about 30 percent of the total population) and the government estimates that each year, about 4 million of them become sexually active (Ministério da Saúde, 1999, 2000). According to the most recent Brazilian Demographic and Health Survey, both young men and women in Brazil are engaging in sexual intercourse at younger ages, irrespective of place of residence or years of education (BEMFAM, 1996; Franca, 1999). For example, the median age at first intercourse of women aged 20-24 years was 2 years younger than that for women aged 45-49 (18.7 and 20.7 respectively) and a similar trend was found for men (median age was 16.5 for men aged 25-29 and 17.3 for those aged 45-49 – data for men aged 20-24 was not available) (BEMFAM, 1996). In terms of condom use, a recent national survey conducted by the Brazilian Ministry of Health (Paiva *et al.*, 2003) found that only 28 per cent of young people aged 14-25 reported using condoms consistently in the last 6 months.

Among the countries of Latin America, Brazil has the highest number of people infected with HIV (UNAIDS, 2003). Though the epidemic is stabilising in Brazil (UNAIDS, 2002b), the spread of HIV is increasing amongst heterosexual men and women. According to the Brazilian Ministry of Health, in 1985, men were 25 times more likely than women to be infected with HIV, whilst in 2000, men were only twice as likely to be infected (Ministério da Saúde, 2001). Santos and Santos (1999) reported that 56 per cent of all notified cases of AIDS

between 1980 to 1999 were of people between the ages of 15-34. It is believed that due to the long latency period between infection with HIV and the onset of AIDS, most of these people were infected during their adolescent years (Santos and Santos, 1999).

Although the overall national fertility rate has been declining since the 1970s, young people's fertility rate has been increasing. According to the Ministry of Health (Domingues, 1999), between 1993 and 1996 there was a 20 per cent increase in the number of deliveries among 10-14 year olds and 11 per cent among 15-19 years olds. In 1998 for example, about one million females aged 15-24 and 32 thousand aged 10 to 14 gave birth (Ministério da Saúde, 2000). It has been estimated that approximately 20-25 per cent of all pregnant women in Brazil are between 10-19 years of age (Domingues, 1999). According to a recent UNFPA report (2003), Brazil is ranked 46th in the world in terms of adolescent birth rate, which is 73 births per 1000 young women aged 15-19 (significantly greater than the world average at 50 births).

One consequence of unintended pregnancy is induced abortion. Terminating a pregnancy in Brazil is illegal unless a women's life is in danger or if the pregnancy is a result of rape. Despite this, a high number of abortions using unsafe methods are performed and are amongst the world's highest figures (Misago, 1998). Many young women who decide to terminate their pregnancies do so in ways that are dangerous and potentially life threatening. Misago (1998) reported that 25 per cent all obstetric admissions in the northeast of Brazil were abortion cases. Due to abortions being illegal, accurate numbers of abortions performed in Brazil are not available which also results in the underestimation of adolescent pregnancy rates.

1.2 Young People's Reproductive Health in Site of Study

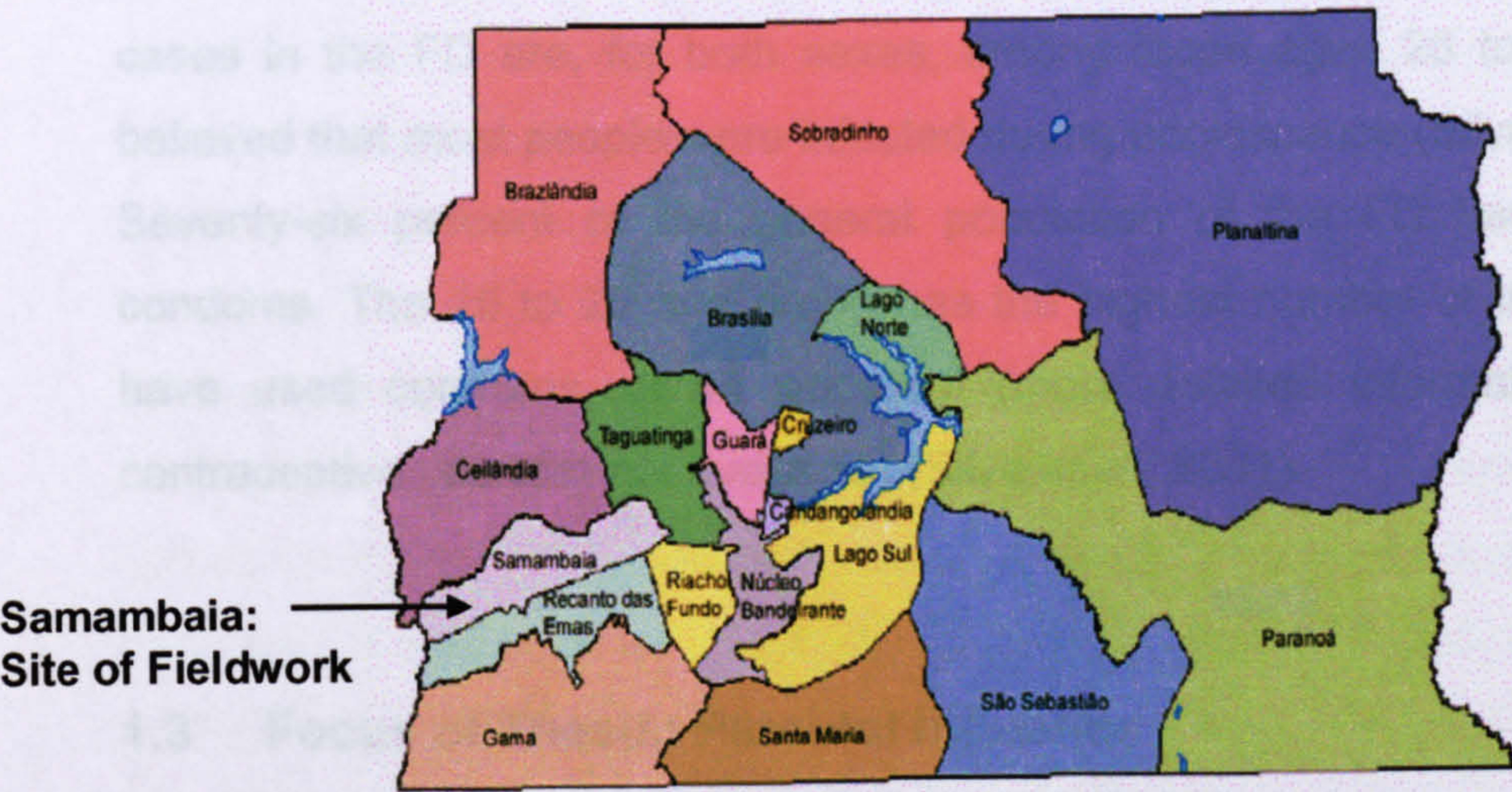
This study was conducted in Samambaia, a low-income² borough of the capital city Brasília. Combined with the other outer boroughs of the city (also known as “satellite cities”) Brasília is called the “Federal District” (FD). In Map 1.1, the location of the FD in Brazil is shown and Map 1.2 depicts the borough of Samambaia in the FD. The current population of the FD is approximately 2 million with 155 thousand in the borough of Samambaia (CODEPLAN, 2000). Young people between the ages of 10 to 24 constitute just over a third of the population. The average monthly income per capita in Samambaia is about US\$ 85 (at an exchange rate of US\$1 = R\$2 in 2000) Ninety-six percent of the population are literate. In the FD as a whole, 97 per cent of young people go to primary school (Ministério da Educação, 2002). However, 29 per cent of these students are below the correct school level for their age and only 58 per cent of them finish primary school (i.e. 42 per cent of students stop studying before completing primary school). Of those who complete primary school, only 45 per cent of young people enrol in secondary school. Although over half of students in secondary school are below the correct year group for their age, three-quarters of them complete it (Ministério da Educação, 2002). Samambaia is in general an unsafe town, due to the high prevalence of violence, gang membership among youths and incidence of alcohol and drug abuse.

² This study focused on one social class because of limited funds, restraint on time and the need for control. A low-income community was chosen for study because people living there are more ‘at risk’ in terms of reproductive and sexual health. Poorer populations are, for example, more vulnerable to STIs and HIV/AIDS (Ministério da Saúde, 2000; Population Reports, 2001).

Map 1.1 Map of Brazil



Map 1.2 Map of the Federal District



The Brazilian Government recently published the findings of a situational analysis of HIV/AIDS in the FD (Silva *et al.*, 2001). Consistent with the national situation, the average age at first sexual intercourse in the FD has decreased for both young men and women and is currently 14.2 years and 15.6 years respectively. Changes in age at first sexual intercourse are evident by the proportion of young people that have had sex before age 15. In 1984, just over a third of young men aged 16 to 19 had experienced their first sex before age 15, whilst in 1998, the percentage was nearly one half. Similarly, only 14 per cent of young women in 1984 had had their first sex before the age of 15 but in 1998, the proportion increased to 32 per cent.

The first case of AIDS was identified in the FD in 1985. Today, Brasília is the tenth highest city in Brazil in terms of the total number of reported AIDS cases across all ages (Ministério da Saúde, 2001 and 2002) and among young people, it is in sixth place (Santos and Santos, 1999). The majority of new AIDS cases in the FD are, for both sexes, among those aged 25 to 39, and it is believed that most people were infected during adolescence (Silva *et al.*, 2001). Seventy-six percent of the general population of the FD has never used condoms. The 16 to 25 age group has the highest number of individuals that have used condoms, at 44 per cent (more detailed information regarding contraceptive use was not available) (Silva *et al.*, 2001).

1.3 Focus of Thesis: Parental Influence

In order to design successful reproductive and sexual health interventions for young people, an understanding of the sources that influence their sexuality³ is required. This has been the focus of a large number of studies which have highlighted the important role that social factors such as peers (Bearman *et al.*, 1999; Milburn, 1995;), schools (Furstenburg *et al.*, 1985; Grunseit, 1997; UNAIDS, 1997) and the mass media (Miranda-Ribeiro and Moore, 2000;

³ Sexuality' is used in this thesis as a general term that refers to sexual knowledge, attitudes and behaviours.

Population Reports, 1995) have on young people's sexuality. Another source that has attracted an increasing amount of research in recent years is the influence of parents (Jaccard and Dittus, 2000). Several reasons suggest a possible role for parents in influencing young people's sexuality: First, parents are the people primarily responsible for the care and development of young people and are their main agents of socialisation (Kahn and Kline, 1980; Maccoby, 1992); second, they act as role models (Jaccard and Dittus, 1991); third, they are important sources of information and beliefs for many topics (Feldman & Rosenthal, 2000) and fourth, they influence other risk behaviours such as alcohol and drug use (Allen *et al.*, 2003; Johnson & Johnson, 2001; Wood *et al.*, 2004). In addition, previous studies examining parental influence on different aspects of young people's sexuality specifically have found them to play a significant role (see chapter 2 for a review). These studies however, have primarily been conducted in the developed world, mainly in the USA. Parental influence on young people's sexuality in the context of developing countries, including Brazil, has been largely ignored and is an important unanswered question as cultural, social and economic differences between countries have the potential to affect the influence of parents. It is therefore important to investigate how parents influence young people's sexuality in a Brazilian context and how it compares to previous studies. Towards this end, this study focused on exploring the relationship between different parental influence factors on the sexual knowledge, attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour of young people in a low-income community of Brazil. The specific research objectives are presented next. The conceptual framework, research questions and hypotheses are detailed in chapter 3.

1.4 Research Objectives

The research objectives of this study were the following:

1. To describe the nature of young men's and women's sexuality in a low-income community of Brazil, by focusing on their sources of sexual information, sexual knowledge, attitudes and different aspects of their sexual behaviour.
2. To describe the characteristics of parental influence, separately for males and females, by focusing on the following factors: verbal and non-verbal sexual communication, parental sexual attitudes and the quality of relationship between young people and parents.
3. To explore the influence of parental factors on the sexual knowledge, attitudes, timing of first intercourse and contraceptive behaviour of young men and women.

1.5 Outline of Thesis

This thesis is organised as follows. In chapter 2, a literature review of studies that have investigated parental influence on young people's sexuality is presented. Chapter 3 is the conceptual background of the research and includes a review of the theories that guided the study, specific research questions, conceptual framework and hypotheses. In Chapter 4, a detailed discussion of the methodology is presented. Chapters 5 to 8 are the result chapters of the survey and qualitative studies. Chapter 5 addresses the first objective of the study shown above, chapter 6 the second objective and chapters 7 and 8 the third. In chapter 9, the final conclusions are presented.

Chapter 2: Literature Review of Parental Influence on Young People's Sexuality

Research into parental influences on young people's sexuality has normally been divided into two areas: those examining family process variables and those studying family structure variables (Miller *et al.*, 1998, 2001). Family process variables have generally been researched more than structure variables and include verbal sexual communication; parental control; quality of relationship with parents, and parental attitudes. Family structure variables include socio-economic level and marital status. In the following review, studies examining the family process variables will be examined first, followed by a summary of studies examining family structure variables. As mentioned in Chapter 1, most of the published studies about parental influence on young people's sexuality were conducted in the USA. As a result, the majority of the research referenced in this chapter is American. In the last section of this chapter, the few Brazilian studies that have been undertaken are also reviewed.

2.1 Verbal Sexual Communication

Many researchers have investigated whether verbal sexual communication (talking about sex related issues) between young people and parents is associated with young people's sexual health. Several studies have found that a greater extent of verbal sexual communication is related to improved sexual knowledge (Pick and Palos, 1995); young people not having sexual intercourse or waiting until later (Fox and Inazu, 1980; Furstenburg *et al.*, 1985, Karofsky *et al.*, 2000), having fewer sexual partners (Holtzman and Robinson, 1995; Leland and Barth, 1993), using contraception (Fisher, 1987; Handelsman *et al.*; 1987) and talking to their sexual partner about sex (Hutchinson & Cooney, 1998; Shoop & Davidson, 1994).

Other studies have found associations which differ from the ones described above. That is, verbal sexual communication between young people

and parents has been found to be related to young people being more likely to have sex (Darling and Hicks, 1982; Inazu and Fox, 1980; Jaccard *et al.* 1996). For example, in Jaccard *et al.*'s (1996) study, a survey of 751 black youths aged 14 to 17 years indicated that those that had had discussions with their mother about birth control were more likely to be sexually active than those that had not.

The association between parent-adolescent verbal sexual communication and young people's sexual behaviour is further complicated by the fact that some studies have not found associations at all (Casper, 1990; Furstenburg *et al.*, 1984; Newcomer and Udry, 1985; Rodgers, 1999). For example, Furstenburg *et al.* (1984), interviewed 290 young women (most aged 15-17) at family planning clinics in the United States, and asked them about their communication with their mother and their use of contraceptives. It was found that young girls who talked to their mothers about sex were no more likely to use contraception than those that did not talk. Similarly, Newcomer and Udry (1985) found that, from a sample greater than 500 young people (216 young men and 313 young women aged 12-16), communication about sexual issues with their mothers was not related to their sexual and contraceptive behaviour.

In general, research examining the influence of parent-adolescent verbal sexual communication has produced inconsistent results, and thus the associations with young people's sexual health remains controversial. Many of the inconsistent findings have been attributed to crude measures and simplistic conceptualisations of verbal sexual communication (Jaccard and Dittus, 1991). Fisher (1993), for example, argued that the inconsistent findings were due to selective samples and wide variation in the operationalization of verbal sexual communication. Similarly, Hutchinson and Cooney (1998) highlighted this in their paper by reviewing eight frequently cited studies and discussing how they varied widely in terms of sampling and in the way in which verbal sexual communication was measured. Other studies have provided some further explanations for the controversial findings by highlighting the complexity of verbal sexual communication and this research is reviewed in the following sections.

2.1.1 Frequency and Source of Verbal Sexual Communication

The majority of studies that have examined parent-adolescent verbal sexual communication have shown that it rarely occurs. That is, most parents do not discuss sexual matters with their children, irrespective of age (Fox, 1981; Hutchinson & Cooney, 1998). When it does occur, it is usually mothers and daughters that are involved (e.g. Baumeister *et al.*, 1995; Fisher, 1987; Miller *et al.* 1998a; Pick and Palos, 1995; Raffaelli *et al.*, 1998). When fathers do engage in verbal sexual communication, it mainly occurs with their sons (Fisher, 1990). In general, both young men and women seldom talk to their parents about sex, and in the case of young men, this is even rarer.

Fitzgerald & Fitzgerald (1987) identified several reasons why parents do not communicate with their children about sex and these are: embarrassment and discomfort, lack of knowledge, uncertainty about own values, fear that discussion will encourage sexual activity, and inability to initiate and maintain a conversation. Research has shown that parents are more likely to engage in verbal sexual communication with their children if they themselves have had the experience of talking about sex with their own parents (Fisher, 1990). Moreover, some studies have shown that parent-adolescent verbal sexual communication is related to the extent of general communication in the family (Schreck, 1999). That is, young people that have good overall communication with their parents are more likely to talk to them about sex as well. However, Fisher 1987 found that the quality of family communication in general was not related to verbal sexual communication. The author concluded that there are families with good quality of overall communication that do not talk about sex, and there are others with poor quality of communication that discuss sex often. Thus the relationship between general communication in the home and verbal sexual communication in particular is not clear.

2.1.2 Content of Verbal Sexual Communication

The extent of parent-adolescent verbal sexual communication varies by sexual topics. Baumeister *et al.*, 1995 found that out of four sexual topics (menstruation, sexual intercourse, STIs, and contraception) menstruation was the most frequently discussed by parents, whilst contraception was the least.

The authors concluded that programmes that are developed to help parents discuss sex with their children should focus on their difficulty to discuss birth control. Miller *et al.* (1998a) studied parent-adolescent verbal sexual communication about 10 sexual topics and found that young people (aged 14-17) and mothers reported more discussions about AIDS and STIs than other issues such as puberty and contraception. Moreover, possible associations between specific sexual topics and adolescent sexual behaviour can be explored. Miller *et al.* (1999) found that a general measure of verbal sexual communication was not related to young people's sexual behaviour (aged 14 – 16), but communication about specific sexual topics was. What these studies indicate is that when investigating verbal sexual communication, it is important to ask about specific sexual topics so that a better measure of the extent of communication is obtained.

2.1.3 Quality and Timing of Verbal Sexual Communication

Some studies have examined the manner in which verbal sexual communication takes place between parents and young people. For example, Whitaker *et al.* (1999) examined the process of verbal sexual communication and found that only if parents were open, skilled and comfortable in talking about sex with their son/daughter (aged 14-17), was it associated with greater condom use and partner communication about sexual risk. When the discussion consisted of merely demanding that their adolescent child did not have sex, it had no effect. Similarly, Mueller and Powers (1990) found that those young people (234 male and female American college students who were grouped in analysis) who perceived their parents style of verbal sexual communication as supportive were less sexually active than those who perceived their parents to be controlling in terms of their style of communication.

The actual timing of parent-adolescent verbal sexual communication has been shown to be an important factor in its association with young people's sexual behaviour. Miller *et al.* (1998b), for example, examined the association between the timing of the first mother-adolescent condom discussion and adolescents' use of condoms during their first and later sexual encounters. The study found that if the first mother-adolescent communication about condoms occurred the year before the first sexual intercourse it was significantly related

to greater condom use, but discussions that took place during or after the year of first intercourse were not. The findings of this study emphasise the importance of engaging in parent-adolescent verbal sexual communication before young people become sexually active.

This issue of timing is also important because it provides a possible explanation for some of the inconsistent results discussed earlier. For example, the studies that have shown parent-adolescent verbal sexual communication to be related with greater sexual activity of young people (Darling and Hicks, 1982; Inazu and Fox, 1980; Jaccard *et al.* 1996) could be explained by the timing of the conversation. For example, it is possible that in Jaccard *et al.*'s (1996) study, most of those young people that talked to their mother's about birth control were those that were already sexually active. That is, the conversation might have been a result of sexual behaviour and not a precursor. In fact, research has shown that parents are more likely to start talking to their children about sex if they suspect or know that their children are sexually active (Jaccard and Dittus, 1993). Thus merely asking young people about verbal sexual communication with their parents without asking about the timing of the conversation could continue to produce controversial results.

2.2 Non-verbal Sexual Communication

One of the main limitations of studies that have investigated verbal sexual communication is that they have generally ignored the non-verbal aspects of sexual communication. That is, they have only investigated sexual communication as being the *verbal* discussion of sex-related issues. As Fox (1981) clearly stated: "Perhaps the most serious is the fact that such communication about sex and sexual values is unspoken, indirect, and non-verbal. It is not captured by asking who said what, to whom, when." (p. 76).

Even though the majority of parents do not actually discuss sexual matters with their children, one form of communication that is present, whether intended or not, is the non-verbal sexual climate in the home. Most young people have not had any verbal sexual communication with their parents but

this does not mean that their parents have not communicated messages of sexuality to them. As Geasler *et al.* (1995) stated “Transmission of values and attitudes about sexuality from parents to children is inevitable; values and attitudes are transmitted whether parents choose to actively participate in the sexuality education of their children or are neglectful in the matter” (p. 184). Similarly, as Koblinsky and Palmeter (1984) argue, “Through...indirect methods of communication, parents convey sexual values, attitudes, and information to their offspring” (p.33). In fact, by not discussing sex-related issues, parents are communicating to their children that sex cannot be discussed (Benshoff and Alexander, 1993, p. 290) and this communication in itself may be related to young people's sexual health.

Only a limited number of published studies have examined non-verbal sexual communication. Some researchers have investigated expression of affection in the home as a form of non-verbal sexual communication. For example, Koblinsky and Palmeter (1984) found that greater exposure to maternal sexual affection toward a spouse was a significant predictor of young women (college students, aged 18 to 22) speaking affectionately to men and being assertive in sexual encounters. That is, young women who witnessed a greater amount of physical affection between their mother and her spouse were more assertive with their own partners in comparison to those who witnessed a lesser amount of affection.

Joffe and Franca-Koh (2001), investigated the link between remembered non-verbal sexual communication in the home and current sexual behaviours and feelings of guilt among a sample of 167 white British men and women with a mean age of 23.9. Non-verbal sexual communication in their study included: nudity in the home, affection between parents, signs of parental sexual activity and contraceptive use, and intimation of mother's menstruation. They found that higher levels of family non-verbal sexual communication were linked to earlier onset of sexual activity, fewer sexual partners, and lower feelings of aspects of sexual guilt. Okami *et al.* (1998) found that exposure to parental nudity was associated with reduced sexual activity among adolescents. In summary, these few studies indicate that non-verbal sexual communication plays a role in young people's sexual behaviour and therefore needs to be further investigated.

2.3 Quality of Relationship with Parents

Researchers have investigated whether young people's *quality of relationship with their parents* is associated to their sexual behaviour by focusing on concepts such as parental support, closeness, connectedness, warmth and attachment (Miller *et al.*, 2001). The results of this area of research are generally consistent, showing that a *better* quality of relationship with parents (e.g. greater amounts of parental support and parent-child closeness) is related with young people abstaining or postponing sexual activity, having fewer sexual partners and using contraception more consistently (Jaccard *et al.*, 1996; Resnick *et al.*, 1997; Weinsten and Thornton, 1989; Upchurch *et al.*, 1999; McNeely *et al.*, 2002).

Sieving *et al.* (2000), for example, investigated the influence of connectedness to a mother on timing of first sex of young people, using longitudinal nationally representative data of American adolescents (Add Health). The findings showed that for over 3000 young people (students in 8th to 11th grades), who were virgins at wave 1 of the study, high levels of connectedness to their mothers was significantly associated with delays in sexual intercourse 9 to 18 months later (gender differences were not examined).

2.4 Parental Attitudes

Many studies have shown that parental sexual attitudes are related to young people's sexual health (Inazu & Fox, 1980; Jaccard and Dittus, 1991; Jaccard *et al.*, 1996; Miller *et al.*, 1999; Sieving *et al.*, 2000). In general, these studies have found that young people with parents who disapprove of adolescent sexual activity are more likely to delay sexual intercourse, have fewer sexual partners and use contraception. For example, using data from Add Health, McNeely *et al.* (2002) found that maternal disapproval of early sex, as reported by the mothers themselves, was related to their daughters' (aged 14 and 15 years) later sexual debut.

Nevertheless, the link between parental attitudes and young people's sexual behaviour seems to be related to parent-adolescent sexual communication and parental closeness (Jaccard *et al.*, 1996). That is, parental attitudes are related to young people's behaviour when parents are able to communicate them effectively and have a close relationship with their son/daughter. Only few studies however have examined more than one parental 'process' variable in the same study (Miller *et al.*, 2001) and so the conclusions about how they may work together to influence young people's sexuality are limited.

2.5 Parental Control

Most studies that have investigated the influence of parental control (also referred to as monitoring or regulation) on young people's sexual health, have consistently found it to be inversely related to sexual risk taking (Miller *et al.*, 1998, 2001). That is, young people that experience greater levels of parental control are more likely not to have sexual intercourse, start later, have fewer sexual partners and use contraception than those whose parents control them less (Benda & DiBlasio, 1994; Rogers, 1999; Luster and Small, 1994; Romer *et al.*, 1999). Crosby *et al.* (2003), for example, published a unique prospective cohort study that examined the influence of parental monitoring on actual STI infection. African American young women (aged 14-18 years) who perceived that their parents monitored them infrequently at baseline were 1.8 and 2.4 times more likely to test positive during the 18 month follow-up period for chlamydia and trichomoniasis, compared to those who reported greater levels of parental monitoring.

Nevertheless, it has been suggested that too much parental control can also result in negative outcomes. For example, Miller *et al.* (1986) found that the relationship between parental control and sexual intercourse experience was curvilinear. American high-school students aged 15-18 (both males and females) who experienced either very low or high levels of control were more likely to have had sexual intercourse than those who experienced moderate levels of control. However, a greater proportion of those who experienced low

levels of parental control had sexual intercourse than those that experienced high levels.

2.6 Family Structure Variables: Socio-economic Status and Marital Status

There is evidence that the socio-economic status of parents, as measured by level of education and income, is related to young people's sexual behaviour. Some studies have found that young people whose parents have a higher level of education and income are more likely to postpone their first sexual intercourse and to use contraception consistently (Inazu and Fox, 1980; Capaldi *et al.*, 1996; Upchurch *et al.*, 1999). However, other studies did not find socio-economic status to predict adolescent sexual behaviour (e.g. Miller *et al.*, 1999).

In terms of parental marital status, Miller (1989) examined the effect of single parenting on adolescent sexual behaviour and found that young women aged 15 to 19 that came from a single parent home were more likely to engage in pre-marital sex than those from homes with both parents, even after controlling for age, race, social class and religion. Similar results were reported by Jemmott and Jemmott (1992), in which African American males aged 11 to 19 years who lived with both of their parents reported more consistent condom use and were less likely to report fathering a pregnancy than those that did not live with both parents. However, the effect of marital status needs to be further investigated because it is possible that the findings are due to the fact that in single parent homes there are fewer parents available to monitor children, instead of it being purely a result of family structure (Meschke *et al.*, 2000a). According to Upchurch *et al.*'s study (1999), interactions between parents and youth, including parental control, did not vary by family structure thus suggesting that family structure plays a role in itself on timing of first sex.

2.7 Brazilian Parental Influence Literature

The majority of the research that has so far been reviewed in this chapter was conducted in the United States. Very few published studies were found of research conducted in Brazil examining parental influence on young people's sexuality. In fact, most of the studies that were found had not been designed to investigate parental influence specifically but, instead, young people's sources of sexual information, which included some information about parents (Leite *et al.*, 1994, 1995; Miranda-Ribeiro and Moore; 2000, Sakamoto, 1991; Vitiello and Conceicao, 1988; Vivarta, 1999). Some of these studies are reviewed below.

Vivarta (1999) summarises the results of a survey of 240 youth, between the ages of 15 and 24, from the city of São Paulo. The young people were asked to rank order the sources from which they obtained information about sex. Their main source of information was *conversations with friends*, followed by *magazines* and *television programmes*. Parents were ranked fourth, followed by conversations with other adults and siblings. The sources from which young people obtained the least information were radio programmes, schools and sex education books. Interestingly, 34% of all youth interviewed stated that they wished they could have been informed about sex through *conversations with parents*. This desire was also found among American adolescents (Dittus *et al.*, 2004).

In Vitiello and Conceicao's (1988) study, 153 single young women of low and middle-income families answered a questionnaire about parental views on pre-marital sex. According to them, the parents of both groups provided either none or insufficient information about sex. In contrast, Vasconcelos *et al.* (1993) found that young women mentioned their mothers to be their main source of information about sex. The type of information that their mothers discussed was mainly about menstruation and pregnancy. In terms of other topics of discussion, friends were also mentioned as important sources of information. AIDS was most frequently mentioned through the television.

Leite *et al.* (1995) surveyed 268 young men at the State University of Campinas (of the state of São Paulo) about their sexuality and their sources of

sexual information. Fifty-one percent of them stated that they had mainly received information about sex from their friends whilst 31% had received it from their parents. Leite *et al.* (1994) conducted a similar study with young women and found that 54% of them had obtained information about sex from their parents. These studies did not examine communication about sex in any more detail but the findings suggest that in terms of the two samples, young women are more likely to discuss sex with their parents than young men.

Sakamoto (1991) found that traditionally, Brazilian men receive information from parents about sex when the parents believe that their son is already sexually active. The verbal sexual communication that takes place is therefore not intended for educating their son, but rather, to acknowledge the fact that their son is already engaging in sexual relations. For young women, the communication normally begins when the female has her first period. The information conveyed at this time is viewed by the young girl as informative, but not related to sex in itself. Sakamoto's (1991) data shows that 70% of women and 40% of men do not feel comfortable in discussing their sexual life with anybody. Those that do talk with someone do so with their friends.

The general conclusions of the studies summarised above are that peers are the main source of sexual information for Brazilian adolescents. In general, it seems that females are more likely than males to communicate with parents, but both report that parents provide insufficient information. Though some young people desire more verbal sexual communication with their parents, most are embarrassed to discuss sexual issues with them (Miranda-Ribeiro and Moore, 2000). These Brazilian findings are very similar to the results of studies conducted in the United States about sources of sexual information and sexual communication with parents (Handelsman *et al.*, 1987; Miller *et al.*, 1998a; Thornburg, 1981).

In terms of Brazilian studies examining parental influence specifically on young people's sexuality, no published studies were found. However, a Ministry of Health survey conducted in 1998 (Ministério da Saúde, 2000) found family structure to be related to age at first intercourse. Specifically, a greater proportion of young people aged 16-19 who lived with only one parent, as

opposed to both, had sex before age 15 (64% compared to 36%)¹. More details, such as gender differences by family structure, were not given. This finding is similar to some of the studies referenced above that examined the influence of parental marital status on young people's sexuality.

2.8 How Does this Study Add to the Literature?

This study adds to the literature by addressing several limitations of the research reviewed above:

First, this research adds to the general literature by examining whether findings regarding the influence of particular parental factors on the sexuality of primarily American youth, also hold for young people in a low-income community in Brazil. As far as it is known, no other research has been conducted in Brazil with this specific focus. In addition, this study provides the opportunity to shed light onto some controversial findings in previous studies, such as the influence of verbal sexual communication.

Second, this study advances knowledge on this topic by exploring specific factors of non-verbal sexual communication that have either not been researched or only examined in a few studies. These include: non-verbal feelings of sex talk with parents; parental non-verbal feelings/reactions to sex-related scenes on television; nudity; quality of the relationship between parents; physical affection between parents and between parents and young people. This is discussed further in the following chapter.

¹ These percentages may seem to contradict earlier data presented in Chapter 1 (page 17) since the median age of first sex of women aged 20-24 in 1996 was reported at 18.7. In essence, the data referred to above seems to report greater sexual activity than the earlier data. However, there are several explanations for the differences: first, the data presented above includes young men who are more likely to have sex at an earlier age than young women (thus increasing the proportions who have had sex before age 15); second, the age groups are different (the above data refers to young people aged 16-19, a younger cohort) and third, the samples are dissimilar (the 1996 data was a nationally representative survey whilst the above data is derived from a sample of urban cities).

Third, most of the studies that have been conducted to investigate parental influence on young people's sexuality have either not specified which parent was studied or focused only on *mothers'* influence on *daughters* (Rodgers, 1999; Miller *et al.*, 2001). Parental influence on *young men* and the influence of *fathers* on the sexuality of both genders has generally been little researched (Dutra *et al.*, 1999). Thus in this study, the influences of mothers and fathers on young men and women are examined separately in order to determine whether these influences vary by gender (Rodgers, 1999).

Fourth, with the exception of some longitudinal studies (e.g. Karofsky *et al.*, 2000, Meschke *et al.*, 2000b), most previous research has consisted of cross-sectional, quantitative studies. Though this investigation was also a cross-sectional study, a combination of both quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed, thus providing more comprehensive and valid results (see chapter 4 for a discussion about the benefits of using a multi-method approach).

Finally, in addition to providing information about parental influence factors and their relationship to young people's sexuality, this study provides descriptive information about the sexuality of Brazilian youth, from a low-income community. Except for demographic data from the most recent DHS (1996) and the Ministry of Health's reports that were referred to in chapter 1, there have only been a few published articles describing the nature of young people's sexuality in Brazil (e.g. Leite *et al.*, 1994, 1995; Souza *et al.*, 1993, 1996). In addition, most of these studies have relied on the survey method and there is a dearth of qualitative information of young people's sexuality. Only one such study is evident (Raffaelli *et al.* 1993) which focused on street youth.

Chapter 3: Conceptual Background of Study

The aims of this study were threefold: 1) to describe the nature of young people's sexuality; 2) to describe the characteristics of parental influence factors; and 3) to explore the influence of parental factors on young people's sexual knowledge, attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour. In this chapter, the theories that guided this study are presented, followed by the specific research questions, conceptual framework and hypotheses.

3.1 Theoretical background

Sexuality research has mainly been an atheoretical field of study as most studies have been descriptive in nature (Weis, 1998). In general, the theories that have been used in sexual behaviour research have come from social psychology and have focused on three levels: individual, social and community. The theories aimed at the individual level have been used to address sexual behaviour by focusing on individual processes, such as knowledge and attitudes, instead of on the role of social groups or structural factors in the community (UNAIDS, 1999a). Examples of such theories include: Health Belief Model (Rosenstock *et al.*, 1994), Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980) and AIDS Risk Reduction Model (Catania *et al.*, 1990). These theories have been criticised by many researchers for ignoring the wider social and cultural contexts in which sexual activity occurs, as well as for assuming that sexual behaviour is based on rational decisions (e.g. Ingham and van Zessen, 1997).

Theories that focus on explaining sexual behaviour at the social level, view individual behaviour as being embedded in a social context. These theories consider that an individual's immediate social surrounding and relationships influence their behaviour (UNAIDS, 1999b). Examples of such theories include: Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977, 1986); Sexual Interaction Framework (Ingham and van Zessen, 1997) and Sexual Script

Theory (Gagnon and Simon, 1973). The community level theories focus on structural and environmental factors of communities (UNAIDS, 1999b). In essence they link up individual behaviour with larger community variables, such as social-cultural norms and political situations. Some studies, for example, have focused on socio-economic factors and have shown that they are related to sexual behaviour (Sweat and Denison, 1995).

The focus of this study is on the effects of the social level on the individual, specifically the influence of parents on young people's sexuality. This study draws on two particular theories: Social Learning theory (Bandura, 1977) and the Social Development Model (Catalano and Hawkins, 1996). These two theories are summarised below and in addition to the findings of previous studies, were used to develop the hypotheses and conceptual framework of this study.

3.1.1 Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory views sexuality as learned, and not biologically determined. "Social learning" essentially refers to the process through which an individual acquires information, attitudes, values and behaviour skills from interacting with a social environment. The main researchers associated with developing Social Learning Theory are Bandura (1977, 1986), Rotter (1954, 1982) and Mischel (1968, 1973), though Bandura's approach has been the one most used in sexuality research (Hogben and Byrne, 1998). Researchers have argued that sexuality is learned through the processes of Social Learning Theory (e.g. Roberts, 1980, Kahn and Kline, 1980) and these are summarised next.

Social Learning Theory was developed by using learning theory concepts, such as classical and instrumental conditioning, and incorporating other elements, such as social cognition and modelling. The theory states that there are three main ways through which we learn: conditioning, reinforcement and modelling. Conditioning refers to both classical and instrumental conditioning. The difference between the two is that in classical conditioning, a stimulus is followed by a stimulus. For example, a noise followed by food. In

instrumental conditioning, a response is followed by a stimulus. For example, opening the door is followed by food. In Social Learning Theory, the concept of conditioning refers to instrumental conditioning instead of classical conditioning because the latter rarely occurs in everyday social life, due to one's behaviour having an effect on the environment.

In instrumental conditioning, when a response is followed by a stimulus, the stimulus is either a reinforcement or a punishment. That is, depending on what the stimulus that follows the response is, it will either strengthen (reinforce) or weaken (punish) the preceding response. Particular responses, or behaviour, are more likely to occur if they are reinforced, instead of punished. For example, in terms of sexual behaviour, young people are more likely to desire sexual intercourse if they experience pleasure, instead of pain. Therefore, when an individual's behaviour is rewarded, that behaviour is reinforced. In Social Learning Theory, reinforcement also refers to consistency of experience. That is, the more an individual has a particular experience, the more it is reinforced and the more likely it is to be modelled and internalised.

Modelling means learning through observation. Research has shown that modelling is an important way through which we learn (Gwartney-Gibs et al., 1987; Tontodonato and Crew, 1992). Individuals learn how to behave in a variety of situations through observation. People can generalise modelled behaviour to situations where the model is absent or which have not been specifically modelled. Research has shown that a model is more effective when an individual knows the model well, has a strong bond to him or her, or if the model is prestigious (Hogben and Byrne, 1998). Modelling often operates together with reinforcement. That is, one is more likely to model a behaviour if it is observed to be rewarded instead of punished. For example, in terms of young people modelling the behaviour of their parents, they are more likely to model those behaviours that they perceive to bring benefits instead of negative consequences (Rotter, 1954, 1982).

How is information transferred from a model to an observer? Bandura (1986) explained that "in everyday life, of course, observational learning is rarely restricted to a single modality. People pattern their behaviour on

information conveyed by both the overt actions and the words of others” (p72). In other words, information is transmitted from model to observer through verbal and non-verbal communication (Kahn and Kline, 1980).

Lastly, Social Learning Theory provides an explanation for behaviours that occur in the absence of a direct external reward, by making inferences about cognitions involving either expected rewards or task efficacy. According to Rotter (1954, 1982) cognitively generated expectancies about rewards can predict behaviour even when there is no external reward. Bandura (1977b, 1986) argued that behaviours are adopted through modelling, for example, because it increases self-efficacy – that is, the belief in one’s ability to succeed at a given task – which is in itself rewarding.

3.1.2 Social Development Model

The Social Development Model (Catalano and Hawkins, 1996) is a theory that was developed for the field of criminology, to explain antisocial behaviour. It is a model that integrates a variety of other theories that have been used to explain deviant behaviour and that have strong empirical support. For example, the Social Development Model agrees with the Social Learning Theory that children learn patterns of behaviour from their parents and other socialisation units (e.g. school and peers) through the processes of social learning summarised earlier.

Even though the Social Development Model was not developed to explain young people’s sexuality, aspects of the model can be adopted for this area and in particular, to explain parental influence. The theory posits that in addition to the social learning processes, a social bond is developed between an individual (e.g. young person) and a socialising agent (parent), which has power to influence the behaviour of the individual. Similar to Hirschi’s (1969) theory of social control, the Social Development Model states that “bonding is expected to influence individual’s behaviour choices by entering into their calculation of the costs and benefits of any particular behaviour to self-interest. If individuals engage in behaviour that is inconsistent with the standards and norms of those to whom they are bonded, the bond may be threatened if the behaviour is exposed...the behaviour of the individual will depend on the

predominant behaviours, norms, and values held by those to whom the individual is bonded” (p. 157). Therefore this theory suggests that the strength of the bond young people have with their parents will impact the sexual behaviour of young people.

3.2 Research Questions, Hypotheses and Conceptual Framework

This study aimed to answer three general research questions. The first two questions are descriptive and the third is exploratory and tested specific hypotheses, which are illustrated through a conceptual framework¹. The research questions, conceptual framework and hypotheses are presented below. The specific ways in which previous research, Social Learning Theory and the Social Development Model were used to formulate the hypotheses are explained.

Question # 1: What is the nature of young men’s and women’s sexuality in a low-income community of Brazil?

To examine this question, descriptive quantitative and qualitative analysis was conducted focusing on young people’s sources of sexual information, sexual knowledge, attitudes and different aspects of their sexual behaviour. These results are provided in chapter 5.

¹ The conceptual framework presented in this thesis is not a theory of how the variables under investigation are related to one another but instead, a diagram which guided the analysis by summarizing the study’s hypotheses.

Question # 2: What are the characteristics of parental influence factors?

In chapter 6, descriptive quantitative and qualitative findings of the characteristics of parental influence are presented, by focussing on the following 8 factors:

1. Verbal sexual communication
2. Parental sexual attitudes
3. Quality of relationship with parents
4. Parental control
5. Parental non-verbal feelings and reactions to sex-related scenes on television
6. Nudity
7. Quality of relationship between parents
8. Physical affection between parents, and parents and young people

The first four parental factors in the above list are the main ones that have been investigated by previous studies and were reviewed in chapter 2. The last four factors have seldom been researched and were conceptualised in this study as being factors of non-verbal sexual communication (in addition to parental control, more details in the next section).

To be clear about the difference between verbal and non-verbal sexual communication, it is important to define the two terms. Verbal sexual communication includes the discussion of factual information; discussion of beliefs, values and attitudes; and indirect discussions of sex-related information. Non-verbal sexual communication is more complex and includes behaviours, gestures, facial expressions, body movements, physical appearance, touch, and physical objects that communicate messages related to sexuality (Warren, 1992).

It was important to include non-verbal sexual communication factors in this study because, as discussed in the previous chapter, most research has only focused on the verbal aspects of sexual communication and thus has neglected the 'non-verbal' ways through which parents may influence young

people. As stated by the Social Learning Theory, observational learning occurs through both verbal and non-verbal communication (Bandura, 1986). In addition, communication researchers have shown that about 60 to 70 percent of meaning in a communication exchange is derived from non-verbal behaviour (Burgoon, 1994). Warren (1995) emphasised the importance of the non-verbal aspects of sexual communication by stating: "Family sex communication has largely been defined as a verbal-intentional process, although non-verbal codes may hold the greater explanatory power" (p. 197). The distinction between verbal and non-verbal sexual communication is important because whether parents talk to young people about sexual issues or not, they communicate sexual messages to their children non-verbally. In other words, even though most parents do not *talk* about sex with their children, they do *communicate* sexuality to them non-verbally, such as their sexual attitudes.

In this study, non-verbal sexual communication was studied through 5² specific parental influence factors: parental control; parental non-verbal feelings and reactions to sex-related scenes on TV; quality of relationship between parents; nudity and physical affection between parents and towards young people. Each of these were hypothesised to convey messages of sexuality non-verbally to young people and to be related to their sexuality. In the next section, specific explanations for why each of the factors were conceptualised as a non-verbal sexual communication factor are provided. However in general, reasons for choosing these 5 factors included: 1) there was a rationale for believing they could communicate sexual attitudes non-verbally (in the case of 'parental control' and 'non-verbal feelings and reactions to sex-related scenes on TV'); 2) the importance of modelling as emphasised by the Social Learning Theory (in the case of 'quality of relationship between parents' and 'physical affection') and 3) they had been studied before (as in the case of 'nudity' and 'physical affection', in Joffe and Franca-Koh, 2001).

² In addition to these 5 factors, there were 3 other non-verbal sexual communication factors which were originally included in the study and these were: awareness of parental sexual behaviour, gender roles in the home (specifically, division of chores) and sex-related things in the home (e.g. contraception, sex-education books and pornography). These three factors were dropped in the final analysis because of the need to reduce the number of parental factors and because they had in particular been poorly measured.

Question # 3: Do parental factors influence the sexual knowledge, attitudes, age at first intercourse and contraceptive behaviour of young men and women?

The conceptual framework of this study is presented in Figure 3.1, which illustrates how the 8 parental influence factors were hypothesised to be related to young people's sexual knowledge, sexual attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour. These four outcomes were chosen because they are frequently used as reproductive and sexual health indicators and are key measures of sexuality (FHI, 2001). In fact, many of the studies conducted in developed countries to investigate parental influence on young people's sexuality focused on one or more of these outcomes (e.g. Karofsky *et al.*, 2000; Miller *et al.*, 1998b; Pick and Palos, 1995). In general, sexual knowledge and sexual attitudes are important because of how they relate to sexual behaviour; timing of first sex is key because the younger young people have sex, the less likely they are to use contraception and the more likely they are to have multiple partners; and finally, contraceptive behaviour determines the risk that sexually active young people have of becoming infected with STIs and HIV or having an unintended pregnancy.

The different components of the conceptual framework, examined from left to right, are summarised below. To ease the explanation of the hypotheses, the numbers referring to each relationship illustrated in Figure 3.1, will be referred to. It is important to mention that though the conceptual framework was developed for both genders, it was tested separately for young men and women (i.e. parental influence was analysed for each gender independently).

Diagram 3.1 Conceptual Framework for Testing the Hypotheses of Parental Influence on Young People's Sexuality

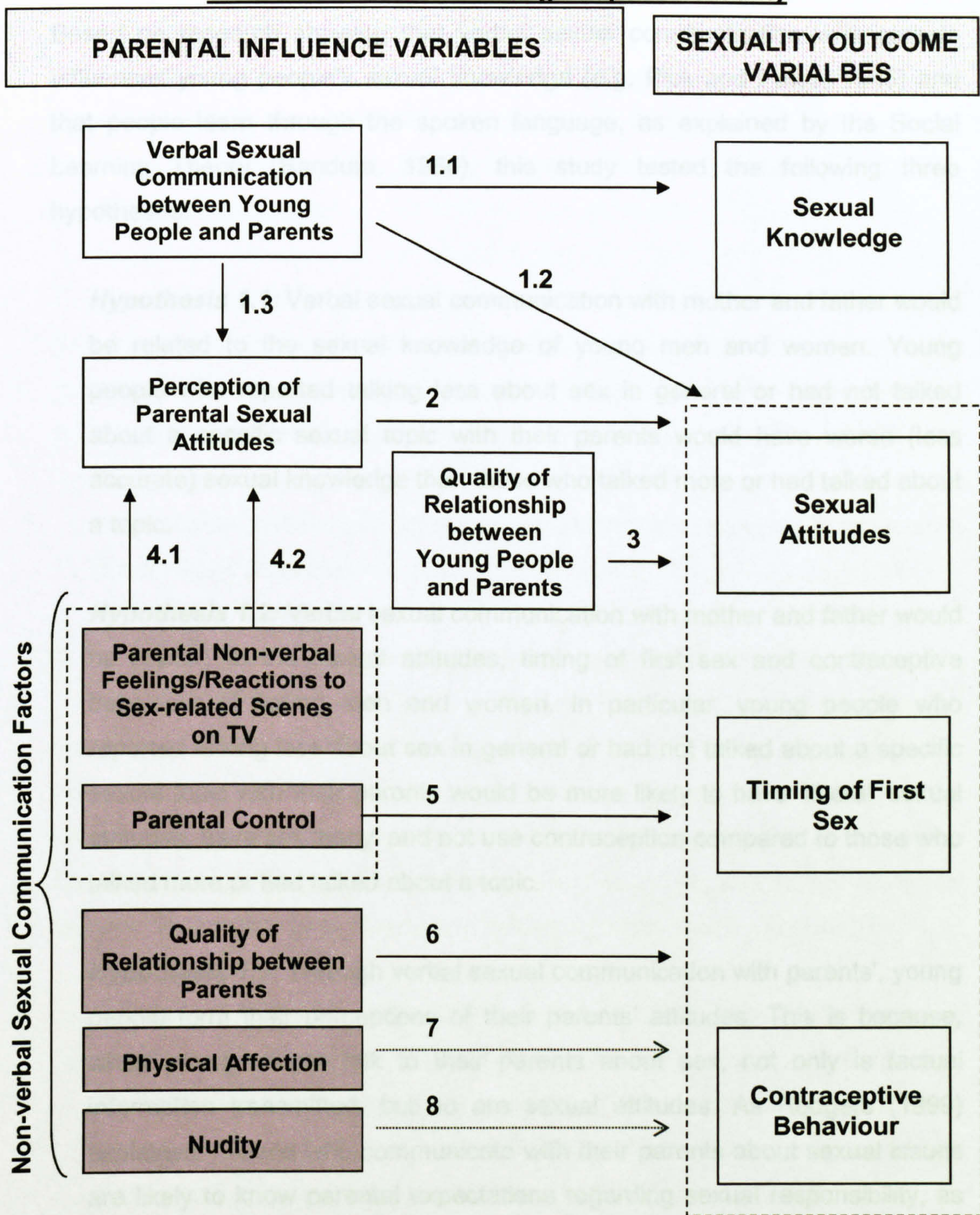


Diagram 3.1 illustrates the hypothesised relationships between parental influence variables (left hand column) and sexuality outcome variables (right hand column). The parental influence variables shaded are those through which non-verbal sexual communication was investigated in this study. Solid arrows indicate specific relationships that have been suggested from previous studies and theories, while the dashed arrows are relationships that are being explored in this study. The numbers next to the arrows refer to specific hypotheses explained in the text. It is clear from previous studies that the four sexuality outcome variables are related to one another, but these are not illustrated in the diagram because their relationships were not the focus of this study.

1. Verbal Sexual Communication

Based on research showing that verbal sexual communication with parents influences young people's sexual knowledge (e.g. Pick and Palos, 1995) and that people learn through the spoken language, as explained by the Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1986), this study tested the following three hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1.1: Verbal sexual communication with mother and father would be related to the sexual knowledge of young men and women. Young people who reported talking less about sex in general or had not talked about a specific sexual topic with their parents would have worse (less accurate) sexual knowledge than those who talked more or had talked about a topic.

Hypothesis 1.2: Verbal sexual communication with mother and father would be related to the sexual attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour of young men and women. In particular, young people who reported talking less about sex in general or had not talked about a specific sexual topic with their parents would be more likely to have 'liberal' sexual attitudes, have sex 'early' and not use contraception compared to those who talked more or had talked about a topic.

Hypothesis 1.3: Through verbal sexual communication with parents', young people form their perceptions of their parents' attitudes. This is because, when young people talk to their parents about sex, not only is factual information transmitted, but so are sexual attitudes. As Rodgers (1999) explained: "Teens who communicate with their parents about sexual issues are likely to know parental expectations regarding sexual responsibility, as well as specific ways to minimise sexual risks" (p.100). It is hypothesised that the more verbal sexual communication occurs between young people and parents, the more clearly parental attitudes are communicated.

2. Parental Sexual Attitudes

The following hypothesis was formulated based on the findings of previous research (e.g. Jaccard *et al.*, 1996) showing that parental sexual attitudes are related to young people's attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour. In addition, the Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1986) also supports the hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: Young people's perception of parental sexual attitudes would be related to their own sexual attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour. In particular, young people who perceive their parents having 'liberal' sexual attitudes would be more likely to have 'liberal' attitudes themselves, engage in intercourse at an earlier age, and not use contraception compared to those whose parents are perceived to have more 'conservative' attitudes.

3. Quality of Relationship between Young People and Parents

According to previous research (e.g. Resnick *et al.*, 1997), young people's quality of relationship with their parents has consistently been found to be related to their sexual attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour. These findings guided the formulation of hypothesis 3, as well as the two social theories used in this study (Bandura, 1986 and Catalano and Hawkins, 1996).

Hypothesis 3: Quality of relationship with parents would be related to young people's sexual attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour. Young people with a more distant quality of relationship with their parents would be more likely to have 'liberal' sexual attitudes, have sex 'early' and not use contraception compared to those with a closer relationship.

4. Parental Non-verbal Feelings and Reactions to Sex-related Scenes on TV and Parental Control

Though *parental non-verbal feelings and reactions to sex-related scenes on TV* and *parental control* have not been previously studied as a non-verbal sexual communication factor, there are reasons to believe that they would communicate parental sexual attitudes to young people. For example, a parent turning off the TV when a sex-related scene is shown (e.g. a young couple kissing passionately) may communicate a disapproving attitude towards the behaviour being depicted. Similarly, strict rules about dating may also communicate disapproval towards sexual behaviour, even though such an attitude may not be explicitly stated. Based on this rationale, the following hypothesis was formulated.

Hypothesis 4.1: *Parental non-verbal feelings and reactions to sex-related scenes on TV and parental control*, would communicate parental sexual attitudes to young people non-verbally.

It is important to state that the above hypothesis could only be investigated qualitatively and this was done by examining the explanations of the young people in the focus groups and in-depth interviews about how they perceive their parents' sexual attitudes.

Hypothesis 4.2 below specifies the hypothesis that was tested regarding the influence of *parental non-verbal feelings and reactions to sex-related scenes on TV* on young people's sexuality.

Hypothesis 4.2: Young people's perception of their parents' feelings and reactions to sex-related scenes on TV would be related to their own sexual attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour. Specifically, young people who perceived their parents feelings and reactions to be 'liberal' would be more likely to have 'liberal' attitudes themselves, engage in intercourse at an earlier age, and not use contraception compared to those whose parents feelings and reactions were perceived as more 'conservative'.

5. Parental Control

Previous research (e.g. Luster and Small, 1994) has consistently shown that the extent of parental control is related to young people's sexual risk taking and this determined the formulation of the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 5: The extent of reported parental control would be related to young people's sexual attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour. Specifically, young people who reported lower levels of parental control would have more 'liberal' sexual attitudes, have sex 'early' and not use contraception compared to those with higher levels of parental control.

6. Quality of Relationship between Parents

According to the Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1986), people learn behaviours through observation. This implies that in terms of learning about couple relationships, one way young people do so is through observing others. As mentioned earlier, this learning occurs through *modelling* and this is reinforced through consistent observation over the years. Since the couple relationship most young people have closest and consistent observation of is that of their parents, they are likely to learn about couple relationships, at least in part, by observing how their parents relate to one another. 'Quality of relationship between parents' was conceptualised as a non-verbal sexual communication factor because, as young people observe their parents' relationship, they are learning about how couples relate to one another, non-verbally (as opposed to direct verbal instruction about how couples should relate to one another). In general, this study explored whether young people's perception of the quality of relationship between their parents was related to their sexuality and tested the specific following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 6: The quality of relationship between parents would be related to young people's sexual attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour. Young people who perceived their parents to have a more distant quality of relationship would be more likely to have 'liberal' attitudes, have

sex 'early' and not use contraception compared to those whose parents' had a closer relationship.

7. Physical Affection between Parents and between Parents and Young People

Physical affection between parents and between parents and young people was investigated in this study as an exploratory factor. It was conceptualised as a non-verbal sexual communication factor because by experiencing and observing physical affection (or a lack of it) it was believed that young people learn how to (or not to) demonstrate care and love through physical touch. In addition, affection between parents communicates to young people non-verbally, what couples do in terms of affection. The following hypothesis was developed as a guide for the analysis and was not based on any previous research or theory and therefore has no clear direction of influence on young people's sexuality.

Hypothesis 7: The extent of physical affection between parents and between parents and young people would be related to young people's sexual attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour.

8. Nudity

Similar to physical affection, nudity was included in this study as an exploratory factor and refers to the nudity of parents in front of young people and vice versa. It was conceptualised as a non-verbal sexual communication variable, since it is a behaviour related to sexual privacy and could imply either sexual openness or 'liberal' sexual attitudes. The following hypothesis was also developed as a guide for the analysis and was not based on any previous research or theory.

Hypothesis 8: The extent of parental nudity would be related to young people's sexual attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour.

In general, this chapter has presented the two social theories, three specific research questions, conceptual framework and hypotheses that guided this study. In the next chapter, the research methodology that was designed to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses is presented.

Chapter 4: Methodology

It has been recommended that whenever possible, researchers should use both quantitative and qualitative methods when conducting reproductive and sexual health research (Campbell *et al.*, 1999). Using a combination of methods can increase the validity of studies because research questions can be addressed from different angles and the results checked across the various methods. This is particularly important in terms of sexual health research because of the sensitive nature of the topics studied. Some studies have, for example, found that surveys can produce unreliable information about sexual behaviour and that qualitative methods can be used to check quantitative results (e.g. Bleek, 1987). In addition, qualitative data enables research topics to be explored in greater depth and explain statistical findings. Thus in general, the two methods can complement one another by providing more valid and comprehensive results and this is why this study adopted a multi-method approach.

4.1 Summary of Methodology

The fieldwork was conducted in Samambaia, a low-income borough of the Federal District (FD) of Brazil (see chapter 1), between May and November 2001 and had three phases of data collection. A summary of the methodology is provided in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Summary of Methodology

Phase of Fieldwork	Method	Data Generated	Method of Analysis	Results
FIRST June-July, 2001	8 Focus groups with young people and parents were conducted	Transcripts	Qualitative analysis was conducted with the assistance of the QSR N5 software	Norms regarding young people's sexuality and the parental influence factors (Chapters 5 and 6).
SECOND August, 2001	1077 self-completion questionnaires were collected	1) Quantitative data 2) List of young people who wanted to participate in the in-depth interviews	Quantitative analysis was conducted using the STATA software	1) Descriptive quantitative information of young people's sexuality and parental influence factors (Chapters 5 and 6). Multivariate Logistic Regression Models of parental influence on young people's sexuality (Chapter 7). 2) Selection of participants for in-depth interviews.
THIRD September-November, 2001	138 Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 36 young people and 30 parents	Transcripts	Qualitative analysis was conducted with the assistance of the QSR N5 software.	Patterns between the parental influence factors and young people's sexuality (Chapter 8).

4.2 Before Data Collection

Before the fieldwork methodology is described in detail, certain preparation procedures that took place in London and in Brasília prior to data collection are briefly described in the following sections.

4.2.1 Development of Instruments and Ethical Approval

The self-completion questionnaire and the topic guides used in the focus groups and in-depth interviews were designed based on the conceptual framework of the study. Information sheets and consent forms for the participants were also developed. All of this material was presented to two ethical committees for approval: one at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and one

at the University of Brasília. The letters of approval by both of these committees are presented in the Appendix of Chapter 4.

4.2.2 Affiliation to the University of Brasília

The principal investigator was affiliated during the fieldwork to the Centre for Studies in Public Health (NESP) department at the University of Brasília (UnB) as a visiting researcher. This affiliation provided the principal investigator with space to interview, select and train fieldworkers, hold meetings, keep fieldwork materials and clean survey data.

4.2.3 Selection of Low-Income Community and Schools

Once approval from the local ethical committee was obtained, permission from the Education Authority of the Federal District (FEDF) to involve public schools in the research was sought. The head of the FEDF reviewed the research proposal, study instruments and ethical approval and authorised the study to be conducted. They suggested two low-income boroughs of the FD for the study to be conducted: Samambaia and Ceilandia. In these boroughs, large public schools with young people aged 13-24 could be found. Samambaia borough was chosen because it was closer to the city of Brasilia, where the principal investigator was located.

After the low-income community of the FD was chosen, the head of FEDF wrote a letter to Samambaia's Education Authority (FES) asking them to support the study and help the principal investigator gain access to schools (copy of the letter is in the Appendix of Chapter 4). The principal investigator met with the head of FES, who suggested 3 large public schools to contact. The head of FES invited the directors of the 3 schools to meet the principal investigator at the headquarters of FES. At this meeting, the background, objectives and methodology of the study were presented to the directors, as well as the approval from the local ethical committee and the FEDF. All 3 directors were very interested in the research, thought it was important and allowed the principal investigator to have access to their schools. Each director signed a consent form. The principal investigator was given permission to

Photos 1 – 2: Neighbourhood of Samambaia where the Study was Conducted



Photo 3: School Wall in Neighbourhood



conduct the survey and use empty classrooms in the schools for the focus groups and in-depth interviews. In the end, only 2 of the 3 schools took part in the study. One of the schools was not included because it was a primary school and did not include enough young people aged 16 and above. The other two schools were secondary schools, but one of the schools did have an 8th grade, which is the last year of primary school.

Photos 4 – 5: School Buildings



4.2.4 Selection and Training of Fieldworkers

As soon as the principal investigator arrived in the FD in May 2001, the study was advertised at the University of Brasilia, inviting students to participate in the study as fieldworkers. About 40 undergraduate and postgraduate students contacted the principal investigator in one week (most of them were students in Psychology, Sociology and Public Health). Each of the interested students was interviewed and 12 of them were selected to participate, based on their research experience, comfort in talking about young people's sexuality and enthusiasm (fewer participated in the first and third phases of data collection, details are given below). Before each phase of data collection, the fieldworkers were trained by the principal investigator in the theoretical background of the study, as well as the practical application of the research methods (using role play) that were used. In the first phase, 4 males and 3 females were trained, in the second phase 6 males and 6 females and in the third phase, 3 males and 3 females.

4.3 Fieldwork Methodology

4.3.1 First phase: Focus Groups

In the first phase of data collection (June - July, 2001), 8 focus groups were conducted with young people and parents. The aims of the groups were to investigate the norms about young people's sexuality and the five parental influence factors – verbal and non-verbal sexual communication, parental control, quality of relationship with parents and parental sexual attitudes.

Focus groups are a qualitative method in which 6 to 10 participants are brought together to discuss among themselves specific topics that are being researched and introduced by a facilitator. The facilitator essentially guides the discussion and there is also an observer, who takes notes about the discussion and non-verbal behaviour (sometimes there is also a secondary facilitator, as in the case of this study, described below). Focus groups are also usually tape-recorded, with the permission of participants. It is recommended that the groups should be as homogenous as possible – for example, in terms of sex, socio-

economic status and level of education (Campbell *et al.*, 1994) - in order to prevent participants feeling inhibited. Being an homogenous group is also important for research that focuses on a specific characteristic or population – such as youth.

Focus groups are cheap to conduct and excellent in providing information regarding social norms. This means that the participants discuss how specific topics are viewed by society and thus produce socially acceptable arguments. Thus focus groups should not be used to investigate individual behaviour, as participants will only report behaviours that are accepted by the culture and society in which they live. In addition, the differences in socially acceptable beliefs can be explored, as well as the way people interact (verbally and non-verbally) when discussing certain topics.

To recruit participants for the focus groups, the principal investigator visited 5 classrooms with 13-18 year olds in one school (each classroom had an average of 40 students), explained the purpose of the study and invited them to participate. A consent form was distributed to students to read and sign. Young people below the age of 18 were also requested to obtain parental consent. The young people were also given a consent form to take to their parents, inviting them to participate. The students were asked to return the signed forms to the school. About 80 consent forms relating to young people's participation were returned and they were grouped by age and gender. Participants were then chosen at random and collected from their classrooms with their teacher's prior permission on the days of the focus groups. Approximately 35 consent forms from parents willing to participate were returned and all were contacted either by phone or letter to finalise the date and time of their focus group.

Each of the groups took place in an empty classroom, during school hours and were composed as follows:

- i. 1 group of 8 females between the ages of 13-15
- ii. 1 group of 9 females between the ages of 16-18
- iii. 1 group of 6 males between the ages of 13-15
- iv. 1 group of 7 males between the ages of 16-18
- v. 2 groups with 6 mothers of young people
- vi. 2 groups with 4 fathers of young people

Photos 6 – 7: Focus groups with Young Men and Women



Photos 8-9: Focus groups with Fathers and Mothers



Unfortunately, fewer fathers showed up than expected (there were only 4 in each group) despite more having volunteered. Nevertheless, the focus groups were successful as a good interaction and discussion between the fathers in each group took place.

Each focus group had a primary and secondary facilitator and an observer, who were of the same gender as the participants. The role of the primary facilitator was to guide the discussion and ask most of the questions, following the Topic Guide (see Appendix of Chapter 4). Two different Topic Guides were used in the Focus Groups, one with the young people and the

other with the parents. The Topic Guides indicated the topics to be covered and provided examples of questions. The main topics covered were: attitudes towards young people's dating and sexual behaviour, including contraceptive use; sexual knowledge; sources of sexual information and attitudes towards sex education; quality of relationship with parents; verbal sexual communication with parents; parental control; affection; nudity in the home; and non-verbal reaction to sexual scenes on TV.

The secondary facilitator also followed the Topic Guide and sometimes asked questions. Having a secondary facilitator was very beneficial as he/she ensured that the Topic Guide was being covered, was able to probe for extra information whenever the primary facilitator missed the opportunity and was responsible for the recording. The observer of each focus group sat outside of the circle and took notes about the order of the discussion (who spoke when) and any important interaction and non-verbal behaviours observed. He/she was then responsible for transcribing the focus group. Writing down the order of the conversation during the focus group was essential for an accurate transcription, as it was sometimes difficult to distinguish between voices from the tapes alone.

At the beginning of each session, the participants were asked to introduce themselves and then the discussion began with the broader and less sensitive topics. As the discussion progressed, the more delicate topics were raised. The general experience was very positive as a good discussion was achieved in all groups. Neither the young people or the parents were reluctant to talk about the topics raised but the young women generally talked more than the young men and needed less probing. Refreshments were provided in all groups, which also helped the participants relax.

The principal investigator was the primary facilitator for the 4 groups with women – 2 with the young women and 2 with the mothers. One of the male field workers who had further training and previous experience conducting focus groups was the primary facilitator of the other 4 groups – 2 with the young men and 2 with the fathers. Each of the other 6 fieldworkers in this first phase (3 males and 3 females) was trained and took turns being a secondary facilitator and observer.

4.3.2 Second phase: Survey

In the second data collection phase of this study (August 2001), a self-completion questionnaire was administered to students in two schools in Samambaia. Self-completion questionnaires are one of the methods used to collect survey data. The other methods are face-to-face interviews and telephone interviews. The choice of a particular method depends on the sample, cost, convenience and the nature of the questions being asked. Self-completion questionnaires can be distributed to people to complete in the presence of the researcher or, for example, given to participants to fill out at a more convenient time and later returned to the researcher. Because of their possible anonymity, self-completion questionnaires are particularly advantageous for sensitive questions such as sexual behaviour. However, a main disadvantage is that they are only suitable for participants that are literate and thus are not appropriate for all populations.

Piloting of Questionnaire

After the focus groups were conducted, the principal investigator incorporated some of the language used by the young people in the questionnaire and then piloted it. The piloting took place one evening in a classroom with young people who went to school at night. This was done in order to avoid the day students, who would take part in the survey, from being 'contaminated' by the piloting. Pre-testing the questionnaire was important for several reasons: to find out if the language used was appropriate; if the items could be comprehended; to test how long it would take for the participants to complete the questionnaire; to test the 'reading out-loud' methodology and to get the participants' feedback. After the piloting, some of the questionnaire items were re-written and the language changed. The pilot study showed that the questionnaire would take 50 minutes to complete, one full class time, and that it was possible to read all the questions out-loud at a good pace.

Self-completion Questionnaire

The final questionnaire (see Appendix of Chapter 4) had 101 items and consisted of 7 distinct parts:

1. The *'Demographic and Family Characteristics'* section included 18 questions about the respondent's gender, age, level of education, people in household, number of siblings, couple relationship status, religion and religiosity. The questions also covered parental demographics including marital status, age, level of education, household income, religion and religiosity.
2. The *'Parents # 1'* section of the questionnaire comprised 30 items that examined parental control (4 questions), quality of relationship with mother and father (12 questions), relationship between parents (2 questions), verbal sexual communication with mother and father (6 questions), non-verbal feelings during verbal sexual communication with mother and father (4 questions) and parental sexual attitudes (2 questions).
3. The *'Friends'* part of the questionnaire included 3 items about age of friends, frequency of general communication and sex talk in particular.
4. The *'Parents # 2'* section consisted of 12 questions about affection from mother and father and between parents (3 questions), nudity of mother and father past and present (4 questions), sex-related items in the home (3 questions), non-verbal reaction of parents towards sex-related scenes on television (2 questions).
5. The *'Sources of Information, Knowledge and Risk'* part of the questionnaire included 6 items in total; two about main and most desired sources of information, 2 items examining sexual knowledge, which consisted of 10 questions, 1 question about condoms and 1 about risk perception of getting HIV/AIDS.

6. The '*Peer Behaviour and Sexual Attitudes*' portion of the questionnaire contained 4 items. The first 3 questions examined perception of peers' couple relationship and sexual behaviour. The last item consisted of 6 statements exploring sexual attitudes.
7. The last section of the questionnaire, '*Sexual Experience*', comprised 28 items. The first 3 questions asked about dating and sexual intercourse experience. The next 7 items focused on *first* sexual intercourse including, age, partner age and information, contraceptive use, willingness, reason for intercourse and regret. The following 6 items focused on *last* intercourse experience and included similar questions as those about *first* intercourse. The remaining items were about number of sexual partners (2 questions), pregnancy (1 question), condom accessibility and use (3 questions), experience of sex talk with partner (2 questions) and sexual assertiveness with partner (3 questions).

Procedure

After the questionnaire was piloted and finalised, the 12 fieldworkers were trained on how to administer it and the survey date and procedure was agreed with the 2 schools that participated. In two days in August 2001, the research team conducted the survey. In pairs, the fieldworkers went into a total of 24 classrooms in one school and 12 classrooms in another. As soon as each pair arrived in the classroom, they explained the purpose of the research and asked the students to fill out the questionnaire. It was emphasised to the participants that all the information collected was strictly confidential and that participation was voluntary. The students were asked to spread out across the room, so that they were unable to see each other's questionnaire.

The participants were then led through the questionnaire, question by question, by one of the two fieldworkers who read through each of the items out-loud. This was to encourage the students to complete the questionnaire at the same time, which was designed so that every student could answer every question. For example, all of the questions about sexual intercourse experience had an option for those that had not had intercourse to tick. This procedure was

important in order to avoid some participants from finishing before others and forming assumptions of other students that had already completed or were still completing the questionnaire. Whilst one fieldworker read out the questionnaire items, the other one ensured that students were following and answered questions that individual students had.

Photos 10 – 11: The Survey Team and Young People Showing How the Questionnaire was Completed



Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Survey Participants

A total of 1169 questionnaires were distributed and collected and 1097 of these were usable (most items completed). The total response rate was therefore 93.8% and the respondents were aged 13 - 37. All of those who were above age 24 were removed and thus the final number of questionnaires in the analysis was 1077. Tables 4.2 and 4.3 provide information regarding the socio-demographic characteristics of the young people surveyed (aged 13-24) and of their parents (as reported by the youth).

Table 4.2 Age Characteristics of the Young People Surveyed

Age Distribution	Young Men 13-24	Young Women 13-24	All Young People
13	1.5	1.9	1.8
14	7.2	7.1	7.2
15	15.0	15.2	15.1
16	23.7	25.0	24.5
17	23.2	21.0	21.8
18	17.9	15.4	16.3
19	7.2	5.6	6.2
20	3.0	4.6	4.0
21	0.3	1.3	0.9
22	0.5	1.5	1.1
23	0.5	0.3	0.4
24	0	1.1	0.7
N = 100%	401	676	1077
Mean age	16.7	16.8	16.7
Age Groups			
13-17	70.6	70.3	70.4
18-24	29.4	29.7	29.6
N = 100%	401	676	1077

The age distributions and mean ages presented in Table 4.2 are similar for both young men and women. The majority of the survey respondents were aged between 15 and 18. This distribution is due to the sample being primarily of students in secondary school (only the last year of primary school was included – see Table 4.3). The age groups shown in Table 4.2 (13-17 and 18-24) are the ones used for comparison in the next tables and those presented in chapters 5 and 6. Despite the unequal distribution of participants in these age groups (about two-thirds are in the 13-17 age range), they were chosen because they are theoretically different (from age ‘18’ in Brazil you are legally an adult) and because there were enough numbers for comparison.

Table 4.3 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Young People Surveyed

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
◆Year group at school							
8 th grade	24.1	7.7	19.3	24.9	5.0	19.0	19.1
Year 1	33.3	16.2	28.3	30.2	14.0	25.4	26.5
Year 2	32.3	43.6	35.6	33.3	51.0	38.6	37.5
Year 3	10.3	32.5 ^{▼▼▼}	16.8	11.6	30.0 ^{▼▼▼}	17.1	17.0
N = 100%	282	117	399	474	200	674	1073*
Level at school							
At level for age	84.8	14.5	64.2	87.6	12.5	65.3	64.9
Below level for age	15.3	85.5 ^{▼▼▼}	35.8	12.5	87.5 ^{▼▼▼}	34.7	35.1
N = 100%	282	117	399	474	200	674	1073*
Religion							
Catholic	55.6	63.3	57.8	60.6	56.3	59.3	58.7
Protestant/Evangelical	27.2	20.5	25.3	28.8	30.2	29.2	27.7
Other	2.5	1.7	2.3	2.8	3.5	3.0	2.7
None	12.2	12.8	12.4	6.6	8.0	7.0	9.0
Do not know/Does not apply	2.5	1.7	2.3	1.3	2.0	1.5*	1.8
N = 100%	279	117	396	469	199	668	1064*
Religiosity							
Not religious	10.8	7.6	9.8	4.9	8.3	5.9	7.4
Little religious	50.5	59.3	53.2	42.2	43.8	42.7	46.6
Quite religious	25.5	17.0	22.9	34.7	28.9	33.0	29.2
Very religious	7.9	10.2	8.6	15.9	17.0	16.2	13.3
Do not know/Does not apply	5.4	5.9	5.5	2.4	2.1	2.3 ^{***}	3.5
N = 100%	279	118	397	467	194	661	1058*
♣Total household income per month							
<1 minimum salary – < R\$ 180 (£54.5)	11.0	12.3	11.3	15.2	22.7	17.4	15.2
1 to 3 minimum salaries – between R\$ 180 and 540 (£54.5 and 163.6)	40.2	38.6	39.7	40.2	48.0	42.5	41.5
3 to 5 minimum salaries – between R\$ 540 and 900 (£163.6 and 272.7)	28.1	25.4	27.3	24.8	19.2	23.1	24.7
> 5 minimum salaries – > R\$ 1080 (£ 327.3)	20.8	23.7	21.7	19.9	10.1 ^{▼▼▼}	17.0*	18.7
N = 100%	274	114	388	468	198	666	1054*
Parental structure at home							
Both parents	69.1	65.5	68.0	66.0	48.2	60.7	63.4
Only mother	14.9	20.7	16.6	18.9	21.6	19.7	18.6
Mother and step-father	9.5	6.9	8.7	8.8	5.0	7.7	8.1
Only father	2.9	1.7	2.6	0.9	2.5	1.4	1.8
Father and step-mother	2.2	1.7	2.1	1.3	1.0	1.2	1.5
None	1.5	3.5	2.1	4.1	21.6 ^{▼▼▼}	9.3 ^{***}	6.6
N = 100%	275	116	391	465	199	664	1055*

*p < 0.05 ***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)

▼▼▼p < 0.001 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for each gender)

*There were 2 male and 2 female missing cases from the item about year group and level at school, 5 male and 8 female missing cases from the item about religion, 4 male and 15 female missing cases from the item about religiosity, 13 male and 10 female missing cases from item about income, and 10 male and 12 female missing cases from item about parental structure at home.

◆8th grade is the last year of primary school, year 1 is the first year of secondary school, year2 is the second year of secondary school and year 3 is the third year of secondary school.

♣Exchange rate at time of survey was: £1= R\$3.3

Table 4.3 shows similar socio-demographic characteristics for the young men and women. For both genders, most were in year 1 and 2 (28% and 36% of males and 25% and 39% of females respectively) and as expected², those in year 3 were significantly more likely to be those in the 18 - 24 year group (for example, 30% of the young women in the 18 - 24 year group are in year 3 compared to 11% of the 13 - 17 year olds). About a third of the young people were below the level for their age group (36% of males and 35% of females) and this was significantly more so for those in the 18-24 year group (86% of males and 88% of females).

Significant differences between the genders were found for religion, religiosity, total household income and household-parent type. In terms of religion and religiosity, less young women than men had no religion (7% compared to 12%) but in both cases, the majority reported being Catholic (58% of males and 59% of females). More young women considered themselves to be *very religious* than the men (16% compared to 9%) but for both genders, the majority were *little religious* (53% of males and 43% of females).

The distribution of the total household income presented in the table shows that most of the young people were from poor families. The average family monthly income in the Federal District (FD) is 15 minimum salaries (CODEPLAN, 1997), whilst for most of the young people surveyed, it was between 1 and 5 minimum salaries. The significant difference observed between the genders is that the young men reported higher household incomes than the women did (e.g. 22% of males compared to 17% of females reported their household income to be greater than 5 minimum salaries). This difference may be because more young men than women work, which thus contributes to a higher household income.

The majority of the young people lived with both of their natural parents (68% of males and 61% of females). Amongst those that did not, almost 20% of them lived with their single mother (17% of young men and 20% of young women) and only a very small proportion lived with their single father (3% of

² The correct ages for each of the school year groups are as follows: 8th grade, ages 13 – 15, year 1, ages 14 – 16, year 2, age 15 – 17, and year 3, ages 16 – 18.

males and 1% of females). Some lived with a step-parent (11% of males and 9% of females) and in most of these cases, their natural parent was their mother. The biggest difference between the young men and women in terms of parental structure at home was that 9% of young women compared to 2% of men did not live with any parent. This is probably because young women are more likely than men to be either married or co-habiting (supported by Table 5.9 in chapter 5).

Table 4.4 Level of Education and Religiosity of Parents, According to the Young People Surveyed

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-24
Highest level of education of mother (or step-mother)							
None	7.6	11.2	8.7	7.5	9.6	8.1	8.3
Primary	67.4	69.0	67.9	68.3	71.4	69.2	68.7
≥ Secondary	14.5	11.2	13.5	16.1	9.6	14.1	13.9
Do not know/Does not apply	10.5	8.6	10.0	8.1	9.6	8.6	9.1
N = 100%	276	116	392	467	199	666	1058*
Highest level of education of father (or step-father)							
None	4.1	9.9	5.8	10.3	17.4	12.4	9.9
Primary	62.0	64.0	62.6	59.8	49.0	56.6	58.8
≥ Secondary	17.0	10.8	15.2	13.9	9.5	12.6	13.5
Do not know/Does not apply	17.0	15.3	16.5	16.0	24.2**	18.5**	17.7
N = 100%	271	111	382	455	190	645	1027*
Religiosity of mother (or step-mother)							
Not religious	4.7	4.3	4.6	5.5	5.6	5.6	5.2
Little religious	32.4	29.1	31.4	34.8	39.0	36.0	34.3
Quite religious	31.7	35.0	32.7	35.2	28.7	33.3	33.1
Very religious	24.8	24.8	24.8	20.4	22.6	21.0	22.4
Do not know/Does not apply	6.5	6.8	6.6	4.0	4.1	4.1	5.0
N = 100%	278	117	395	471	195	666	1061*
Religiosity of father (or step-father)							
Not religious	11.2	13.3	11.8	17.9	24.5	19.8	16.8
Little religious	44.6	40.7	43.4	38.3	36.2	37.7	39.9
Quite religious	17.5	12.4	16.0	16.8	13.8	15.9	15.9
Very religious	10.8	15.9	12.3	10.9	9.0	10.4	11.1
Do not know/Does not apply	16.0	17.7	16.5	16.1	16.5	16.2*	16.3
N = 100%	269	113	382	459	188	647	1029*

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.001

*There were 9 male and 10 female missing cases from item about educational level of mother, 19 male and 31 female missing cases from item about educational level of father, 6 male and 10 female missing cases from the item about religiosity of mother, and 19 male and 29 female missing cases from the item about religiosity of father.

In Table 4.4, the highest level of education and religiosity of the parents of the participants are presented, as reported by the young people. For most mothers and fathers their highest level of education was *primary school* (69% of and 59% respectively). In terms of religiosity, similar patterns were found for parents (Table 4.4) as for young people (Table 4.3). Mothers were more religious than fathers as a greater proportion of them (22%) were *very religious* compared to fathers (11%).

In general, the socio-demographic characteristics show that the survey participants were generally a disadvantaged group of young people: they were poor, a large proportion of them were behind at school, most of their parents had a low level of education and around a third were not living with both parents.

4.3.3 Third phase: In-depth Interviews

The aim of the third phase of the fieldwork was to conduct semi-structured in-depth interviews with young people aged 16-18 and their parents. In-depth interviews provide information regarding an individual's knowledge, attitudes and behaviours, and the context in which behaviours occur. The interview is usually tape-recorded (with the permission of the participant) and can be either unstructured or semi-structured. The former means that the conversation is guided by the priorities of the participant, whilst in the latter, the interviewer guides the participant to talk about specific topics, using a Topic Guide. The actual order in which the topics are discussed does not matter, however, it is important that each topic is discussed so that information obtained from different participants can be compared.

To recruit interviewees, as soon as the young people completed the self-completion questionnaire (second phase of fieldwork), those aged 16-18 were invited to participate in the in-depth interviews. (This specific age group was chosen because of the need to limit the variability between the interviewees – which is why all ages (13-24) were not invited). Attached to each questionnaire was a consent form. The young people that were willing to participate were asked to give their name, contact and school information so that they could be

contacted if selected. In addition, all of those below the age of 18 were also required to obtain parental consent.

To interview parents, the young people who wanted to participate in the interviews were also asked to give a consent letter to their parents which invited them (the parents) to participate. It was emphasised to the young people that if their parents agreed to be interviewed, their interview would be conducted separately and that all the information collected would be confidential. The students were asked to return the signed consent forms to the school. Approximately 200 completed consent forms were returned (from about a third of the 16-18 year olds surveyed).

Interviewers

In addition to the principal investigator, there were 6 fieldworkers (3 males and 3 females) that were selected and trained to be interviewers (see photo 12 below). Each of them had participated in either one or both phases of data collection and so the principal investigator had had the opportunity to get to know them well and observe their skills. In addition to the training session provided (where they were trained on how to conduct in-depth interviews, both theoretically and practically using the Topic Guides) the principal investigator listened to the recorded tape of their first interviews and gave them feedback about their performance and which topics they needed to cover more deeply. This was important not only to ensure that the interviews were being conducted correctly, but also that the necessary information was being obtained from the interviewees.

A total of 138 interviews were conducted from September to November 2001 (details are below). Except for two interviews (in which the principal investigator interviewed 2 of the young men due to the unavailability of a male interviewer on a particular day), the 3 males conducted all of the interviews with the young men and the fathers. After the training, one of the female interviewers was unable to participate in the study due to personal problems. Thus the principal investigator and the other 2 female interviewers interviewed all of the young women and the mothers.

Photo 12: Interview Team at the Training Session



Procedure

Eighteen young men and 18 young women were selected for interview based on information on their questionnaire, specifically their age, whether they had sexual intercourse and their parental structure at home – i.e. whether they lived with both parents, a biological parent and step-parent, or with a single parent. The aim was to select a group of interviewees who varied on these three components. In Tables 4.5 and 4.6, information regarding these aspects for each of the males and females interviewed is presented. In addition, the Tables also indicate which mothers and fathers were interviewed.

Table 4.5 Young Men Interviewed: Age, Sexual Intercourse Experience, Parental Structure at Home and Parent Interviewed

Young Men Interviewed	Age	Ever Had Sexual Intercourse?		Parental Structure In the Home			Parent Interviewed	
		Yes	No	Both Parents	Parent and Step-Parent	Single Parent	Mother	Father/ Step-Father
M#1	16	✓		✓			✓	✓
M#2	18	✓				✓ (M)	✓*	
M#3	18		✓			✓ (F)		✓
M#4	18	✓		✓			✓	
M#5	16	✓			✓		✓	✓
M#6	18	✓				✓ (M)	✓	
M#7	16		✓	✓				
M#8	16	✓				✓ (F)	✓	
M#9	17		✓		✓			
M#10	18	✓			✓		✓	✓
M#11	17	✓		✓			✓	✓
M#12	17	✓				✓ (M)	✓*	
M#13	16		✓			✓ (F)		
M#14	17	✓				✓ (M)	✓	
M#15	16	✓		✓				
M#16	17	✓				✓ (F)		
M#17	18		✓			✓ (M)		
M#18	17		✓	✓			✓	

*M#2 and M#12 were brothers and therefore it was the same mother that was interviewed.

Table 4.6 Young Women Interviewed: Age, Sexual Intercourse Experience, Parental Structure at Home and Parent Interviewed

Young Women Interviewed	Age	Ever Had Sexual Intercourse?		Parental Structure In the Home			Parent Interviewed	
		Yes	No	Both Parents	Parent and Step-Parent	Single Parent	Mother	Father/ Step-Father
F#1	18	✓		✓				
F#2	16	✓		✓			✓	
F#3	17		✓			✓ (M)	✓	
F#4	18		✓			✓ (M)	✓	
F#5	18	✓		✓			✓	
F#6	17	✓		✓			✓	
F#7	16		✓	✓			✓	
F#8	17	✓		✓				✓
F#9	18	✓		✓			✓	
F#10	17	✓		✓				
F#11	16		✓		✓			
F#12	18	✓				✓ (M)	✓	
F#13	18		✓			✓ (M)	✓	
F#14	16	✓			✓		✓	
F#15	18		✓	✓			✓	✓
F#16	18	✓				✓ (M)		
F#17	16		✓			✓ (M)	✓	
F#18	16	✓		✓				✓

As shown in Tables 4.5 and 4.6, a total of 36 young people were interviewed – 18 young men and 18 young women. They varied between the ages of 16-18, sexual intercourse experience (most had had sexual intercourse) and parental structure at home. Each of the participants were interviewed 3 times, on separate days, with each interview lasting on average 1 to 1 and a half hours. Multiple interviews per young person were necessary in order to cover the extensive Topic Guide (see section below) and to produce the depth of data needed to understand the complex issues of the study. The repeated interviews also allowed the interviewers to return to topics that had not been adequately covered in previous interviews. Moreover, as recommended by Campbell *et al.* (1999), repeated interviews helped a greater rapport and trust to be built with the interviewees. This was especially important for this study because of the sensitive and personal nature of the questions asked. By the time the more sensitive topics were raised in the interviews (for example, their sexual behaviour, in the second or third interview), the interviewees were generally more comfortable with the interviewers. This helped the participants talk about the sensitive information, thus enhancing the validity of the data obtained.

All of the interviews with the young people took place in an empty classroom, during class time. Before each interview, the student was collected from their classroom by their interviewer, with their teacher's permission. Unless the students were involved in an exam or graded assignment, they were allowed to miss their class and participate in the interview. This was a very fortunate situation, because it helped the researchers have access to the interviewees three times each. Before any particular interview began, the interviewers emphasised to the interviewees that their participation was voluntary, they could refuse to answer any particular question and that all information disclosed would be strictly confidential. None of the young people or parents refused to answer any of the questions asked. In fact, they all reported enjoying the experience of being interviewed and that they trusted and felt comfortable with their interviewer.

A total of 22 mothers (10 of the males and 12 of the females) and 8 fathers (5 of the males and 3 of the females) were interviewed. Each parent was

only interviewed once and the length of the interviews lasted from 1 hour to 2 and half hours in some cases. Most of the parents were interviewed in one of the empty school classrooms during the week or at weekends (the research team was given access to the school at the weekends as well). Three of the mothers were interviewed in their homes, due to their inability to come to the school.

It was very difficult to arrange a suitable interview time with the parents, especially the fathers. The fathers, more than the mothers, said that they did not have the time to be interviewed or that they were unwilling to participate. In some cases, it was not possible to even contact the fathers because they lived far away from Samambaia. In general, the above reasons were why some of the mothers and most of the fathers were not interviewed. There was however, one exception and this was because one of the female interviewees (F#1) did not allow the principal investigator to invite her parents to be interviewed. She was very scared that her parents would discover she was sexually active and refused her parents to be contacted, even after she understood that her interviews were strictly confidential. Some of the other interviewees showed concern about their parents being interviewed but trusted the research team's assurance of confidentiality and accepted their parents being contacted.

Topic Guides

There were two Topic Guides used in the in-depth interviews: one with the young people and the other with the parents (see Topic Guides in the Appendix of Chapter 4). The Topic Guide used with the young people consisted of 20 general topic sections which included: relationship with parents past and present; relationship between parents; parental control; relationship with friends and perception of sexual attitudes and behaviour of peers; sources of sexual information; sexual knowledge and attitudes; perception of parental sexual attitudes; verbal sexual communication with parents; nudity; non-verbal reaction to sexual scenes on TV; couple relationship experience and sexual intercourse experience, including details of first, general and last intercourse.

The Topic Guide used with the parents was shorter and consisted of 10 distinct topic sections including: young people's sources of sexual information; sexual attitudes and knowledge related to young people's sexuality; relationship with son/daughter; friends of son/daughter; attitudes towards son/daughter dating and couple experience, verbal sexual communication; nudity in the home; non-verbal reaction to sexual scenes on TV and relationship between parents.

4.4 Analysis

4.4.1 Quantitative Analysis

The data from each of the self-completion questionnaires was entered into the STATA software package (version 5.0) by the survey team and cleaned by the principal investigator, who also conducted all the quantitative analyses.

For the descriptive results presented in this chapter and chapters 5 and 6, chi-square tests, stratified by gender and age, were performed. Means were also calculated for some outcomes such as age at first intercourse. Multivariate logistic regression analyses were conducted separately for males and females to investigate the relationship between several parental influence factors and four aspects of young people's sexuality. Details of this analysis are presented in Chapter 7 as well as information about the scales (of variables) that were developed and used.

4.4.2 Qualitative Analysis

Each of the 8 focus groups and 138 in-depth interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. The focus groups were transcribed by the observer of each group, whilst the interviews were transcribed by 10 independent paid transcribers, who were students from the University of Brasilia. Each of the transcribers was given specific instructions by the principal investigator on how to transcribe the tapes. The transcription started during the fieldwork and was completed in March 2002. All the transcripts were in Portuguese and the analysis was conducted in

this language. Only the quotes included in this thesis were translated into English by the principal investigator, who is fluent in both languages.

The analysis of the textual data was conducted by the principal investigator and was guided by the procedure outlined in a qualitative method field guide (Ulin *et al.*, 2002). The analysis is summarised in the following five steps:

1. *Reading*: Each of the transcripts was read several times until the principal investigator was familiar with the content. This process began in the field and continued in London, as the transcripts were completed. During this reading step, the analyst also started to identify themes in the data, which led to the next step.
2. *Coding*: Each of the transcripts were downloaded into the qualitative analysis software, QSR N5, and were individually coded. The previous step had already highlighted segments in the texts that referred to certain themes to be coded and this continued here. Many of the codes were themes from the conceptual framework and Topic Guides of the study, whilst others emerged from the data.
3. *Displaying*: Once all the transcripts were coded, detailed information for each coded theme was displayed. For each theme, the information was presented in a clear way so that it could then be analysed and reduced (see next step). For the focus groups, where the data were used to provide descriptive information regarding young people's sexuality and parental background, this meant summarising the main arguments related to any particular theme, focusing on similarities and differences amongst individuals and separating the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the data. In terms of the in-depth interviews, each of the key themes was first summarised for each interviewee.
4. *Reducing*: In this step, some of the themes from the focus groups were further reduced to essential points. In terms of the in-depth interviews, the summaries of the key themes for each young person interviewed

were reduced into 'family maps' and tables. A 'family map' was a diagram that summarised the experience of each young person in relation to each key parental theme (see Appendix of Chapter 4 for an example). Tables summarising their parental background experience were also created to reduce the information (see Appendix of Chapter 8).

5. *Final Interpretation:* In this last step of analysis, the displayed and reduced data of the focus groups were used to draw the essential ideas from the data, in relation to the thematic areas of interest (presented in chapters 5 and 6). In terms of the in-depth interviews, the principal investigator used the 'family maps' and tables to compare the experiences of the young people interviewed (similarities and differences between them were studied), explored patterns, and examined relationships with their sexuality using the study hypotheses as a guide (see chapter 8 for more details).

It is important to emphasise that even though the qualitative analysis was summarised above in five sequential steps, it was a flexible and iterative process whereby the principal investigator went back to previous steps several times to refine codes, re-read texts and check the interpretation of the data. In the next 4 chapters, the results of both the quantitative and qualitative analysis are presented.

Chapter 5: Setting the Context of Young People's Sexuality

The aim of this chapter is to set the context of young people's sexuality in Samambaia Town, by providing descriptive information, using data from both the focus groups and survey. Several aspects of young people's sexuality are examined including: sources of sexual information; sexual knowledge; sexual attitudes; sexual behaviour; verbal sexual communication with romantic partner and pregnancy.

The material in this chapter is important because it provides the setting for young people's sexuality in this poor community. This information is particularly valuable because of the scarcity of information related to the sexuality of Brazilian youth in general and in particular, those living outside the main researched cities of the country (e.g. Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and Belo Horizonte). The findings are analysed by gender and in the case of the survey, also stratified by age, as this allows for greater insights into the dynamics of young people's sexuality. All of the survey significant results presented are from chi-square tests. This background information is also important for understanding the results of the quantitative results presented in chapter 7 and the in-depth interviews in chapter 8. Without this information, it would not be possible to fully appreciate and interpret the more complex findings.

The different aspects of young people's sexuality are presented in separate sections of this chapter. Where appropriate, results from the focus groups¹ and survey of young people related to a specific sexuality component are presented together. This is beneficial because it allows for some of the findings to be confirmed by the other method and provides a greater understanding of the different aspects examined. Where suitable, data from the

¹ The quotes from the focus groups presented in this and the next chapter follow the following format: 'PF' is short for *principal facilitator*, 'B' for males (boys), 'G' for females (girls), 'M' for mothers and 'F' for fathers - the number following the numbers (like B2 or G9) denotes the specific focus group participant.

focus groups with the *parents* is also presented as this provides insight into what parents know and how they view young people’s sexuality.

5.1 Sources of Sexual Information

Young people in Samambaia Town learn about sexual issues from a variety of sources. Table 5.1 presents in alphabetical order, the different sources of sexual information that the young people and parents in the focus groups reported to be important.

Table 5.1 Young People’s Sources of Sexual Information, as Stated in the Focus Groups

Sources of Sexual Information	STATED BY:	
	YOUNG PEOPLE	PARENTS
Books	✓	✓
Church	✓	
Magazines – e.g. pornographic and for youth	✓	
Newspapers	✓	
Other relatives – e.g. aunts and cousins	✓	
Parents	✓	✓
Peers	✓	✓
Radio	✓	
School	✓	✓
Siblings	✓	
Television	✓	✓

Both the young people and parents in the focus groups stated that the three main sources of information for young people were: peers, school and television. This finding is confirmed by the survey data. Each participant was asked to indicate the three main sources from which they had learnt about sex. In Table 5.2, the sources of sexual information are shown in rank order.

Table 5.2 Sources of Sexual Information of Young People, by Sex, from the Survey

Sources of Sexual Information (In rank order)	All Young Men 13-24	Sources of Sexual Information (In rank order)	All Young Women 13-24
Friends	59.9	Friends	54.0
Media: Television, Radio and Magazines	50.5	School	53.2
School	45.4	Media: Television, Radio and Magazines	40.8
Books	29.2	Mother (or step-mother)	32.3
Girlfriend/Boyfriend	26.9	Books	32.0
Mother (or step-mother)	12.7	Boyfriend/Girlfriend	23.2
Siblings	10.9	Other relatives	8.4
Father (or step-father)	10.2	Siblings and Health services	7.9
Other relatives	8.6	Church	7.0
Church	6.6	Other	2.4
Health services	6.1	Father (or step-father)	2.2
Other	3.8		
N = 100%	394*	N = 100%	669*

*There were 7 male and 7 female missing cases from this item.

Table 5.2 shows that the main sources of information for both young men and women were *friends*, followed closely by the *media* and *school* (order of the last two differing for young men and women). It is interesting to note that in terms of parents as a source of information for both genders, mothers provided more information than fathers. However, mothers were a more important source for females (ranking fourth) than for males (ranking sixth). Conversely, fathers were higher up for males but were the last source for females. Interestingly, health services were among the least frequent sources for both genders. This suggests that the health services in this community are either not reaching the young people enough with information and services or are not seen as relevant or important.

5.2 Desired Sources of Sexual Information

The young people and parents in the focus groups were asked to talk about which sources they thought should be responsible for providing sexual information. All participants agreed that this role should primarily be played by *parents* and *schools*. The survey participants were asked a similar question,

from which sources they *would like* to get information related to sex. This is an important question because the answers show which sources young people trust the most and would be open to receiving information from. The respondents were specifically asked to indicate three sources from which they desired to obtain more information about sex. The results are shown in Table 5.3 where the desired sources of sexual information are presented in rank order.

Table 5.3 Desired Sources of Sexual Information of Young People, by Sex, from the Survey

Desired Sources of Sexual Information (In rank order)	All Young Men 13-24	Desired Sources of Sexual Information (In rank order)	All Young Women 13-24
Girlfriend/Boyfriend	60.3	Mother (or step-mother)	51.4
School	30.6	Boyfriend/Girlfriend	34.2
Books	22.8	School	32.0
Mother (or step-mother)	20.0	Health services	23.9
Friends and Health services	17.0	Friends	19.7
Father (or step-father)	16.2	Books	19.5
The Media: Television, Radio and Magazines	14.7	The Media: Television, Radio and Magazines	14.5
Church	8.6	Father (or step-father)	13.6
Other	7.8	Siblings	8.6
Siblings	6.8	Church	7.1
Other relatives	4.8	Other	6.7
		Other relatives	3.9
N = 100%	395*	N = 100%	660*

*There were 6 male and 16 female missing cases from this item.

Despite the differences in the rank order of the desired sources for young men and women in Table 5.3, there are some general similarities. For both genders, their romantic partners (*boyfriend /girlfriend*) were amongst the top two of desired sources (ranked first for males and second for females) and *school* was in the top three (ranked second for males and third for females). According to Table 5.2, only about a quarter of young people reported their partners as a main source of information. The fact that the survey respondents ranked their partners so highly as a desired source is an advantage, because they are willing to improve this communication. The rating of schools among the top three most desired sources indicates that young people trust their teachers for sex education.

Very important findings related to the role of parents as a desired source of information are shown in Table 5.3. For both young men and women, mothers and fathers were ranked higher as a 'desired' source than an 'actual' source. Mothers went from sixth place (Table 5.2) to fourth place (Table 5.3) in the case of males and from fourth place (Table 5.2) to the most desired source for females (Table 5.3). Fathers also rose for both genders but are not as desired by young women as they are by the men (ranked eighth for females and sixth for males). These findings suggest that young people wish they could communicate about sex with their parents, especially mothers, more so than they actually do. This is discussed further in the following chapter, where verbal sexual communication between parents and youth is explored.

5.3 Sexual Knowledge

According to the focus group participants, young people are well informed about sexual risks and preventative methods because the information is highly available:

PF: Do you feel well informed [about sexual issues]?

B5: From what I know today and [compared to] what I used to know in the past, I think so. I am well informed.

B2: Nowadays there is a lot of information, [from] the media, school...A person only doesn't learn if they don't want to.

B5: Even because it [sexual information] is exposed, it is shown in every sort of place. The AIDS virus, that and others, the disease, the use of condoms... A television commercial is shown that says: "Carnival, use condoms". I think that only who doesn't want to, will not learn.

(Young men, group 2)

So what are the sexual risks and preventative methods that young people know? Both the males and females in the focus groups stated several sexual risks as well as a number of contraceptive methods and these are shown Table 5.4. Young women for example, discussed that HIV/AIDS is the most serious STI because it is fatal and does not have a cure, and that the "cocktail treatment" only prolongs life. The young men argued that the contraceptive pill is more reliable than the natural calendar method and that condoms are the only way to prevent STIs but are not 100% effective.

Table 5.4 Sexual Risks and Contraceptive Methods, as Stated in the Focus Groups by the Young People

SEXUAL RISKS		CONTRACEPTIVE METHODS
Pregnancy		Condoms – both male and female
STIs in general		Diaphragm
Specific STIs	Chancroid	Injection
	Gonorrhoea	IUD
	Herpes	Natural calendar method
	HIV/AIDS	Pill
	Syphilis	

Despite the fact that more specific and detailed knowledge was not examined in the focus groups, it was noted from a few comments that the young people do have some incorrect knowledge. For example, when one of the young men was listing all of the STIs he knew, he also mentioned haemorrhoid as being an STI. Interestingly none of the other males appeared surprised or said anything, suggesting that they too believe haemorrhoid to be an STI or are unsure. Nevertheless, despite an indication of some erroneous information, the young people demonstrated a good *general* knowledge of sexual risks and contraceptive methods.

In order to gain a better assessment of their sexual knowledge, the survey participants were asked to answer ten questions - half about the prevention of STIs and the other half about avoiding pregnancy – and the results are shown in Table 5.5. The findings provide a clearer picture of what the young people know relatively well and where their knowledge is worse. Examining first their performance on the questions related to STIs (first 5 items), it can be seen that the majority of the participants knew that by using a condom, people are less likely to catch a disease (79% of males and 82% of females answered this question - #1 - correctly). Also most (though fewer) knew that taking antibiotics before having sex does not prevent disease from being transmitted (65% of young men and 70% of women answered this question - #4 - correctly).

What is alarming to note, however, is that only about 60% of young men and women knew that the contraceptive pill does not prevent disease transmission (58% of males and 60% of females answered this question - #3 -

correctly). Even worse, only about half of young people knew that choosing a sexual partner that 'looks healthy' does not prevent disease (50% of males and 52% of females answered this question - #2 - correctly), and only a minority correctly answered the item - #5 - about having sex with someone they know well (37% of men and 40% women). The latter result essentially shows that the majority of the participants thought that by having sex with someone they knew well, they were less likely to get a disease, which of course, is untrue. Thus in terms of young people's knowledge related to the prevention of STIs, the results are worrying. They generally know that condoms prevent disease, but more detailed knowledge is worse.

Regarding the questions related to pregnancy prevention (last 5 items in Table 5.5), the young people generally performed better. Most knew that 'a girl is unlikely to get pregnant if her partner uses a condom' (85% of males and 84% of females answered this question - #6 - correctly) and 'if she takes the contraceptive pill' (58% of men and 72% of women answered this question - #8 - correctly). However, it is important to note that there was a significant difference between the young men's and women's knowledge regarding the contraceptive pill. A greater proportion of the young women answered this item correctly. This finding is not surprising as the contraceptive pill is taken by females, but shows the need for young men to be better informed about female methods of contraception.

Table 5.5 Answers to Sexual Knowledge Questions by Young People

Sexual Knowledge Questions	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
People are less likely to catch a disease when having sex if...							
1) they use a condom							
Answered correctly	78.4	82.0	79.4	81.6	82.8	82.0	81.0
Answered incorrectly	14.8	13.5	14.4	11.6	11.1	11.4	12.5
Not sure	6.8	4.5	6.2	6.9	6.1	6.6	6.5
N = 100%	278	111	389	467	198	665	1054*
2) they choose a sexual partner that looks healthy							
Answered correctly	51.5	45.0	49.6	50.9	54.4	51.9	51.0
Answered incorrectly	29.7	41.3	33.1	34.5	31.3	33.6	33.4
Not sure	18.8	13.8	17.3	14.6	14.3	14.5	15.6
N = 100%	266	109	375	452	182	634	1009*
3) they take the contraceptive pill							
Answered correctly	57.1	58.2	57.5	57.1	65.4	59.5	58.8
Answered incorrectly	19.6	31.8	23.1	25.2	18.7	23.3	23.3
Not sure	23.3	10.0♥♥	19.4	17.6	15.9	17.1	18.0
N = 100%	266	110	376	448	182	630	1006*
4) they take antibiotics before having sex							
Answered correctly	60.8	74.3	64.7	68.6	72.2	69.7	67.8
Answered incorrectly	9.5	10.5	9.8	8.3	6.1	7.7	8.5
Not sure	29.7	15.2♥	25.5	23.1	21.7	22.7	23.7
N = 100%	263	105	368	446	180	626	994*
5) they have sex with someone they know well							
Answered correctly	38.2	34.5	37.1	41.1	43.1	41.7	40.0
Answered incorrectly	43.8	48.7	45.3	39.6	36.5	38.7	41.2
Not sure	18.0	16.8	17.6	19.3	20.4	19.6	18.9
N = 100%	267	113	380	457	181	638	1018*

♥p < 0.05 ♥♥p < 0.01 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for males)

*There were 12 male and 11 female missing cases from the first knowledge question, 26 male and 42 female missing cases from the second knowledge question, 25 male and 46 female missing cases from the third knowledge question, 33 male and 50 female missing cases from the fourth knowledge question and 21 male and 38 female missing cases from the fifth knowledge question.

Table 5.5 Continued...

Sexual Knowledge Questions	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
A girl is unlikely to get pregnant if...							
6) her partner uses a condom							
Answered correctly	87.4	82.8	85.3	83.4	84.3	83.7	84.3
Answered incorrectly	6.1	10.3	7.3	7.2	7.1	7.2	7.2
Not sure	7.5	6.9	7.4	9.4	8.6	9.1	8.5
N = 100%	279	116	395	470	198	668	1063*
7) she is having sex for the first time...							
Answered correctly	79.2	86.1	81.3	83.5	85.5	84.1	83.0
Answered incorrectly	6.7	7.0	6.8	5.0	5.7	5.2	5.8
Not sure	14.1	7.0	12.0	11.5	8.8	10.7	11.2
N = 100%	269	115	384	461	193	654	1038*
8) she takes the contraceptive pill							
Answered correctly	55.9	62.3	57.8	69.7	76.3	71.7	66.5
Answered incorrectly	17.3	18.4	17.6	10.3	6.2	9.1	12.2
Not sure	26.8	19.3	24.6	20.0	17.5	19.2***	21.2
N = 100%	272	114	386	466	194	660	1046*
9) her partner removes his penis from her vagina before ejaculation*							
Answered correctly	43.9	63.7	49.7	40.6	44.8	41.8	44.7
Answered incorrectly	33.5	24.8	30.9	23.5	26.0	24.3	26.7
Not sure	22.7	11.5♥♥♥	19.4	35.9	29.2	33.9***	28.5
N = 100%	269	113	382	463	192	655	1037*
10) she has sex with someone she knows well							
Answered correctly	72.8	76.3	73.8	75.8	80.8	77.3	76.0
Answered incorrectly	13.6	9.7	12.4	10.7	8.3	10.0	10.9
Not sure	13.6	14.0	13.7	13.5	10.9	12.7	13.1
N = 100%	272	114	386	459	193	652	1038*

***p < 0.001(for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
♥♥♥p < 0.001 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for males)
*There were 6 male and 8 female missing cases from the sixth knowledge question, 17 male and 22 female missing cases from the seventh knowledge question, 15 male and 16 female missing cases from the eighth knowledge question, 19 male and 21 female missing cases from the ninth knowledge question, and 15 male and 24 female missing cases from the tenth knowledge question.

The majority of young people also answered correctly that having sex for the first time does not reduce a girl's risk of pregnancy - #7 (81% of males and 84% of females) or by having sex with someone she knows well - #10 (74% of young men and 77% women). However, only about half of the young men (50%) and fewer young women (42%) answered correctly the item on withdrawal. (More of the males in the 18-24 year group, however, answered correctly than the 13-17 year olds - 64% compared to 44%. There was also a significant difference in the distribution between young men and women, in that the females mainly stated that they were unsure of the answer - 34% compared to 19% of the males.) In essence, the majority of the young people believed (or were unsure) that removing the penis from the vagina before ejaculation makes it unlikely for a girl to become pregnant. This finding is noteworthy given that the withdrawal method was reported in the focus groups and in-depth interviews as being a commonly used method.

In general therefore, the young people's knowledge was better for pregnancy prevention and much worse for STIs. Table 5.6 below shows how well the young people generally performed in the 10 sexual knowledge questions, by depicting the number of questions that were answered correctly. The majority of the young people answered 6 to 8 questions correctly (52% of males and 49% of females). The older age group of young women answered significantly more questions accurately than the younger age group. No similar significant difference was found for the young men.

Table 5.6 Number of Questions Answered Correctly by Young People

◆Number of correctly answered knowledge questions	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-24
0 – 5 questions	32.1	29.3	31.3	30.7	20.7	27.9	29.2
6 – 8 questions	52.0	50.5	51.6	48.0	52.1	49.2	50.1
9 – 10 questions	15.9	20.2	17.1	21.3	27.2♥	23.0	20.8
N = 100%	252	99	351	423	169	592	943*

♥p < 0.05 (for significant difference between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for females)
◆This measure was created by adding the answers of the 10 knowledge questions together.
*There were 50 male and 84 female missing cases.

5.4 General Sexual Attitudes of Young People's Sexual Behaviour

It is important to investigate young people's attitudes to sex because it is often related to their sexual behaviour (though the relationship can be complex) and provides insight to how young people think about sexual issues. When the young people in the focus groups were asked about what they thought of male and female sexual behaviour, it became clear that there was a gender bias – i.e. different attitudes towards the acceptability of sex for men and women. Whilst females are typically stigmatised and called pejorative names for engaging in sex, males are called names that glamorise them and favour their behaviour. Young men using these names reflect their attitudes towards females having sex, even though they argue that this is becoming more “normal”:

B4: ...But...it is strange, right...a girl that gets off with one today, tomorrow gets off with another...

B2: But this nowadays is becoming normal, right? I think the same way as men.

B4: But I think that for women it is uglier...

B5: There exists a prejudice by men about women because a man can get off with several women, but if a woman gets off with several men and...[she] will be called many names: tart, slut...

B1: ...There are some girls that the boys don't want to know about anymore because they get off with one and with another....

B4: She becomes less interesting.

(Young men, group 2)

But it is not only the young men that hold these biased sexual attitudes. Young women themselves, also help to perpetuate them – as expressed by one of the females:

G9: Ah, I wanted to talk about that. We say that men can do everything and women cannot. But we women ourselves make them be up there [put them on a pedestal]. If I see for example her [points to girl at her side] with two guys, I say: “Oh, what a slut”...so... but the boy [who does the same] is [considered] powerful, and so it is ourselves that do this [stigmatise females]. Everything that we see [we say, for example] “ah, because that girl is false”. So we ourselves do this, understand? Gosh so many times there is a man washing clothes, [and] there are women that say [question] “gosh, a man washing clothes?”, so it is us women that keep men up there.

(Young woman, group 2)

The survey participants were asked to answer 4 items examining sexual attitudes related to young men and women having sex before marriage. These items, and how the participants answered them, are presented in Table 5.7.

Two general conclusions can be drawn from these results: Firstly, young men hold more 'liberal' attitudes than young women and secondly, both genders are more 'liberal' towards young men's sexual behaviour than young women's.

Table 5.7 Sexual Attitudes of Young People and Derived Measure

Sexual Attitudes	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
1) It is wrong for a girl to have sex before marriage							
Yes	33.1	27.8	31.6	44.4	39.4	42.9	38.7
No	66.9	72.2	68.5	55.6	60.6	57.1***	61.3
N = 100%	278	115	393	473	198	671	1064*
2) It is wrong for a boy to have sex before marriage							
Yes	28.5	22.6	26.8	35.7	31.0	34.3	31.5
No	71.5	77.4	73.2	64.3	69.0	65.7*	68.5
N = 100%	277	115	392	471	197	668	1060*
3) A girl should have plenty of sexual experiences before she marries							
Yes	43.5	34.8	40.9	31.6	25.5	29.8	33.9
No	56.5	65.3	59.1	68.4	74.5	70.2***	66.1
N = 100%	276	118	394	469	196	665	1059*
4) A boy should have plenty of sexual experiences before she marries							
Yes	55.5	61.5	57.3	39.7	33.0	37.8	45.0
No	44.5	38.5	42.7	60.3	67.0	62.2***	55.1
N = 100%	274	117	391	468	191	659	1050*
◆Sexual attitudes in general							
'Conservative'	53.7	50.0	52.6	71.2	76.3	72.7	65.3
'Liberal'	46.3	50.0	47.4	28.8	23.7	27.3***	34.7
N = 100%	272	112	384	466	190	656	1040*

*p < 0.05 ***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
*There were 8 male and 5 female missing cases from the first attitude item, 9 male and 8 female missing cases from the second attitude item, 7 male and 11 female missing cases from the third attitude item, and 10 male and 17 female missing cases from the fourth attitude item.
◆This derived measure was created by adding the answers of the four attitude items in the table. Those participants that had answered 3 or 4 of the items 'liberally' (i.e. *no* in the first two items and *yes* in the third and fourth items) were classified as 'liberal'.

Across all four items, more females than males answered the questions 'conservatively' and the differences are statistically significant. For example, in

the first item, 43% of the young women compared to 32% of the men agree that *it is wrong for a girl to have sex before marriage*. Similar findings are shown for the other three items. When comparing males and females sexual behaviour, both young men and women are more 'liberal' regarding the former than the latter: 34% of females and 27% of males agree that boys should not have sex until they are married, and these percentages are much smaller compared to the same statement related to young women. Similar findings are found for the third and fourth items regarding having many sexual experiences before marriage. These results support the focus groups' findings of the double-standard that exists amongst the sample regarding male and female sexual behaviour. Both young men and women are essentially more 'liberal' towards males having sex before marriage and even having several sexual experiences. Both sexes are therefore responsible for the existence of this inequality.

At the bottom of Table 5.7, a derived measure of *sexual attitudes in general* is shown and it was developed by adding the other four items in the table together (see the notes below the table for more details). In common with the other items in the table, a significant difference between the young men and women is shown. This general measure of sexual attitudes is the one used as the 'sexual attitudes' outcome variable in the logistic regression analysis presented in chapter 7.

5.5 Attitudes towards Condoms

According to both the young men and women in the focus groups, condoms are the main method used by young people to prevent pregnancy and STIs and most believe they should be used. However, condoms are not always used during sexual intercourse and this is for two main reasons: first, young people do not like to use condoms because they feel it diminishes sexual pleasure and second, they do not always have a condom with them at the "right" time:

B1: I have heard before many people say that [using] a condom is the same as sucking a sweet with its wrapper on. (Laughter) So [as a result] they choose a sexual relation, like, sometimes without a condom.

PF: Is using a condom the same as sucking a sweet with its wrapper on?

B4: Yes, because most of the time you don't feel pleasure.

(Young men, group 1)

G1: There are many girls that say that to use a condom is the same as sucking a sweet with the wrapper on. It's not good.

G5: There are many girls who don't like to use it [a condom].

G1: Yes but there isn't, sometimes there isn't a condom at the right time and so you keep going just because of the desire and you're having sex there, even forget you don't have [a condom]...

(Young women, group 2)

There are also gender issues involved in condom use. For example, it was stated that males are more likely to carry condoms than females. In addition, young men carry condoms so that they can show it to their friends and thus suggest that they are sexually active. Young women do not carry condoms because they are stigmatised if they do:

PF: And who is responsible for the condom, the boy or the girl?

Many: The boy!

G3: With some, if he doesn't have a condom, then you say: "You will have to use a condom". Some are even embarrassed, are afraid of losing their boyfriend. There are boys that think like this: if a girl offers a condom to them, "ah, this girl is easy, she has something, if she is offering me a condom, [it means] she has a disease".

(Young women, group 1)

The young women mentioned that they are more embarrassed about buying condoms than the men are. However, when it comes to actually having sex and using condoms, it is usually the female who requests it from the male:

B5: ... "Why didn't I buy a condom"... [he says in lamentation]. The girl came up to me and said "Do you have a condom", the guy: "No, I don't". And then she goes and looks for another...(laughter)... I lost the opportunity...

B1: The problem is... it was a girl that went away!...

B5: She is there really into it, right, [wanting] to have sex, and I'm here tiring out my hand! (Laughter) And then, the time comes [and] I don't have a condom!...Which is the most accessible, the most easy [method] and the guy doesn't have it...he [then] ends it [sexual petting]...[and thinks] will have to wait until the next time! (Laughter)

(Young men, group 2)

According to the young women, whether a condom is used or not, also depends on the type of relationship that they have with their partner. The more serious the relationship is, the more likely they are to use the contraceptive pill instead of a condom. In essence, using condoms seems to be generally associated with less serious relationships, where one does not know and trust the partner as much. In terms of risk prevention, this is a concerning fact because even though young people may know their partner and be in a more committed relationship, this does not guarantee that the person is free of an STI

or will remain faithful. Young people who believe to be in a monogamous relationship are therefore more at risk of contracting an STI.

A final interesting finding from the focus groups related to condom use is that it became clear that the young people are very aware of the existence of 'female condoms' even though they are not widely available or cheap. Both genders emphasised that when they were talking about 'condoms', they were referring to *male* condoms. It seems that this important differentiation (*male* or *female* condom) has only further divided the roles of the genders in terms of condom use. Because the most commonly available and used condom is called the '*male*' condom, then this has emphasised to the young people that these condoms should be carried by *men* because it is *their* method, used by them.

The survey examined 4 issues related to condoms, 2 practical and 2 attitudinal, and the findings related to these are presented in Table 5.8. The first item in the Table shows that for the majority of both young men and women, it is 'easy' for them to obtain condoms. However, it is significantly easier for the males (65%) compared to females (44%). As explained by the participants in the focus groups, it is more acceptable for young men to carry and be responsible for condoms than females. This is such a strong reality that it even affects the females' practical ability to obtain condoms. This difference is probably due to young women feeling more embarrassed and more concerned about what others might think if they obtain condoms. For both genders, it is thought easier for the older ones (aged 18-24) to obtain condoms than the younger ones (aged 13-17). This difference may be because the older ones are more mature and less likely to be embarrassed about obtaining condoms.

Table 5.8 Practical Issues and Attitudes Related to Condoms from the Survey

Condoms	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
1) Easy to obtain condoms?							
Difficult	6.6	5.3	6.2	6.3	8.6	7.0	6.7
More or less	23.9	19.5	22.6	18.8	22.8	20.0	21.0
Easy	61.0	73.5	64.7	42.1	46.7	43.5	51.3
I do not know	8.5	1.8♥	6.5	32.8	21.8♥	29.6***	21.1
N = 100%	272	113	385	463	197	660	1045*
2) Know how to use condoms?							
No	1.5	0.0	1.0	22.8	15.0	20.5	13.3
Yes, I think so	34.0	35.1	34.3	48.6	48.5	48.6	43.3
Yes, definitely	64.6	64.9	64.7	28.6	36.6	31.0***	43.5
N = 100%	271	114	385	461	194	655	1040*
3) It is bad using condoms because they take away the pleasure from sex							
Yes	20.7	31.0	23.7	14.4	22.9	16.9	19.6
No	79.3	69.0♥	76.3	85.6	77.1♥	83.1**	80.5
N = 100%	271	113	384	423	175	598	982*
4) One cannot trust condoms because they break							
Yes	56.8	61.5	58.2	61.6	65.8	62.8	61.0
No	43.2	38.5	41.8	38.4	34.2	37.2	39.0
N = 100%	280	117	397	450	184	634	1031*

p < 0.01 *p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
♥p < 0.05 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for each gender)
*There were 16 male and 16 female missing cases from the first condom item, 16 male and 21 female missing cases from the second condom item, 17 male and 78 female missing cases from the third condom item, and 4 male and 42 female missing cases from the fourth condom item.

According to the focus groups, money is also an issue in condom use because even though young people would like to obtain a condom and use one, some find it too expensive to buy. This could explain why a significant proportion of both genders in the survey stated that obtaining condoms is either *more or less* or *difficult* to obtain. Condoms in Samambaia town are widely available (e.g. in local shops, pharmacies) and it was clear that the young people in the focus groups knew where they could be found. Therefore, it could be the lack of money, especially in this low-income population, that further deters condom use. Free condoms, such as from a health service, are not

easily obtainable because the closest clinic in Samambaia Town is far from where the young people in this study live.

For the second item in Table 5.8, a greater proportion of young men (65%) compared to women (31%) reported that they *definitely* know how to use a condom. This difference may be due not only to condoms being physically worn by men but again, as females are not 'supposed' to be responsible for condoms, they are probably less likely to be prepared and knowledgeable than males.

In terms of attitudes related to condoms, only a minority of young men (24%) and women (17%) agree that *it is bad using condoms because they take away the pleasure from sex*, but males are significantly more likely to agree than females - this is as expected since condoms are worn by men. Nevertheless, it is surprising that only a minority of the males in the survey agreed with this statement because in the focus groups it seemed that this was a major reason why young men do not use condoms. Perhaps this reason is one that is more 'socially' talked about (as focus groups examine socially acceptable attitudes) but that in reality, only a minority agree with this attitude. In fact, many of the males who were interviewed explained that once they tried using condoms, they realised it was not 'as bad' as they thought it would be. This is further discussed in chapter 8. The age of young men and women is also a significant factor for both genders: more in the 18-24 age group agreed that *it is bad using condoms because they take away the pleasure from sex* than the 13-17 years olds. This finding may be because those in the older age group are more likely to be sexually active and hence have more experience with condoms.

The majority of both young men and women stated that they agree that *one cannot trust condoms because they break* (58% of males and 63% of females). This is a noteworthy as it shows that the majority of young people do not trust condoms.

5.6 Couple Relationship Experience

The couple relationships that young people in Samambaia town are experiencing today, have changed in many ways since their parents were young. Firstly, according to the focus groups, young people are starting to have relationships at earlier ages, starting from age 10. Secondly, the relationships experienced by young people today are not as straightforward as the relationships that most parents had. In the past, parents were either in a serious relationship with someone or they were not. Today, the relationships that young people are having are described as either *ficar* or *namorar*.

G3: *Ficar* is only one day...like, you go there, kiss the boy and that is it...you *ficar*. Now *namorar* no...*namorar* is a very serious thing.

G1: There is commitment right, *namorar*, there is commitment. *Ficar* no, *ficar* is to make out with anyone.

G10: And *namorar* has that thing of trust, you cannot be unfaithful...that whole thing.

G7: Ah, many times *ficar* is also for you to get to know the person. Then you only start to *namorar* only after you have gotten to know the person and all, then you take it more seriously.

G3: It can be said that *ficar* is the beginning of *namorar*, of the relationship.

G1: It's the first stage.

PF: When does it become a *namorar* relationship then? What happens?

G5: Most of the time it is he that asks.

PF: Ah, he asks? How does he say it? (Laughter)

G3: Sometimes [he] doesn't even say anything, when you realise, you are *namorar*. (Laughter)

G5: You continue [in a] *ficar* [relationship] a day, another [day], [a] week.

G1: Then it becomes something more serious.

(Young women, group 1)

The best translation for 'ficar' is to 'make out' whilst 'namorar' means to be in a relationship. The mothers in the focus groups commented that the difference between *ficar* and *namorar* is strange because it never existed in their time. Nevertheless, they are aware of this difference and believe that young people prefer to *ficar* than *namorar*. According to what the young people said, the preference seems to vary by gender. The young women generally prefer to have a more serious relationship than the men (*namorar*), but also do like to *ficar*.

PF: And what is better, *ficar* or *namorar*?

Most: Both

G5: Both, right, but I think that *namorar* is better, because you are close to the person you like and then he starts to like you as well.

PF: Is there a difference for males and females? What do they [males] prefer?

G1: *Ficar*, nowadays they don't want to *namorar*. (Laughter)

PF: Why?

G5: I don't know, because they [males] don't like to make commitments.

G1: Each day they [boys] want to *ficar* again.

PF: So females prefer which then?

Most: *Namorar*.

(Young women, group 2)

In Table 5.9, the survey participants' couple relationship status at the time of the survey is shown, as well as whether they have ever *ficar* or *namorar*. First, the relationship status of the young people is significantly different for males and females. The majority of the young men (68%) and women (53%) have no current girlfriend or boyfriend, but the females are more likely to report that they are in a *namorar* relationship than the males (36% compared to 25%). None of the young men are either cohabiting or married, but 3% and 5% of the young women respectively are. Interestingly, a higher proportion of males (7%) indicated their relationship status as *other* compared to females (3%). This difference may be due to more males perceiving their current relationship as *ficar* (i.e. less serious than the females) and hence preferred to choose *other* as a description of their relationship. These results are as expected, based on the focus groups findings presented earlier.

For both genders, the two age groups reported their current relationship status to be significantly different. In essence, those in the older age group (18-24) were more likely to be in a *namorar* relationship (36% compared to 21% of males aged 13-17) and in the case of the females, either cohabiting (9% compared to 1%) or married (14% as opposed to 1%). The majority of both young men and women had experience of *ficar*, with this being significantly greater for the males (87% compared to 78%). For the young men, age is found to be significantly important with 94% of the 18-24 year olds having had a *ficar* relationship compared to 84% of the younger age group. In terms of *namorar*, most young men and women reported having done so (79% of males and 82% of females). A significantly greater proportion of the older females (91%) compared to the younger ones (78%) had had a *namorar* relationship. Interestingly, when comparing the young men and women's experiences, a greater proportion of males have had a *ficar* relationship compared to a *namorar*, whilst for the females, the opposite is true (especially the 18-24 year olds). This finding also serves to confirm what was reported in the focus groups.

Table 5.9 Relationship Experience of Young People

Relationship and sexual experience	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
Current couple relationship status							
No girlfriend/boyfriend	72.6	57.3	68.1	56.2	46.7	53.4	58.9
“Namorando” – in a relationship	21.0	35.9	25.4	38.3	28.9	35.5	31.7
Cohabiting	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	8.6	3.3	2.1
Married	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	13.7	4.8	3.0
Other	6.4	6.8♥♥	6.5	3.4	2.0♥♥♥	3.0***	4.3
N = 100%	281	117	398	470	197	667	1065*
Ever ficar							
Yes	84.2	94.0	87.1	78.5	77.2	78.1	81.4
No	15.8	6.0♥♥	12.9	21.5	22.8	21.9***	18.6
N = 100%	279	117	396	474	197	671	1067*
Ever namorar							
Yes	77.7	82.9	79.2	78.4	90.5	82.0	81.0
No	22.3	17.1	20.8	21.6	9.6♥♥♥	18.0	19.1
N = 100%	282	117	399	473	199	672	1071*

***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
♥♥p < 0.01 ♥♥♥p < 0.001(for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for each gender)
*There were 3 male and 9 female missing cases from the item about current relationship status, 5 male and 5 female missing cases from the item about ever *ficar*, and 2 male and 4 female missing cases from the item about ever *namorar*.
◆Only participants from age 16-24 are included (thus the two comparison age groups are: 16-17 and 18-24). There were a total of 818 respondents from age 16-24 and there were 5 male and 1 female missing cases from this item.

Where do young people meet their *ficar* or *namorar* partners? According to both genders, young people mainly meet their partners at school and at parties:

B1: I think that to catch a girl, like, I think that it is best at a party or at school. Because the girls of...that live close to home, like, very bad...much worse.
B5: It is easier to maintain a *namorar* relationship with someone you already know, that lives on your road, now [that is] to really *namorar*. To *ficar*, it is only at school.
PF: Does it happen a lot at school?
B1: It happens...
B5: At school is what most happens. (Laughter)
B1: I think that at school it is much easier to get a partner, right... Many times the person doesn't even like to study much, but when you see, [and he] feels that the girl is interested in him, [he] says: "Oh, I'm going to school"! (Laughter) He becomes excited... If he could, all the time, every day, [he] would be at school, all the time. Wouldn't even go home, no, would just stay at school.
B5: Some come more to school only to get a girlfriend really. Only to *ficar*...(Laughter)
(Young men, group 2)

Parents are concerned that young people have relationships without them knowing and according to the young people, their relationships are usually

hidden from parents. Despite this however, parents are aware that young people are having relationships because they observe young couples in the street and find out from gossip in the community. Other parental concerns regarding young people's relationships are: who their children's partners are and the effect that the relationships will have on their studies. Nevertheless, their greatest concern has to do with the physical intimacy that young couples engage in. Parents are not against young people having relationships (some parents even mentioned that they wish their children did date and even encourage them to – usually the quieter ones), but rather, are concerned about the kind of relationships that they are having. They report that contemporary relationships are “too liberal, too fast and with no commitment”. Both the parents and young people stated that couple relationships today are more advanced than they were in the past.

5.7 Young People's Sexual Behaviour

So what physical intimacies are young people engaging in today? When young people have a *ficar* relationship, heavy sexual petting is normally what takes place. In some cases, so does sexual intercourse, but this does not seem to be the norm. However, when the relationship becomes more serious, *namorar*, sexual intercourse becomes more common, depending, of course, on the individuals involved:

PF: But are *namorar* and sex the same thing?

B4: Basically, almost always.

B1: Depends, because the young person today, sometimes [he] doesn't want to stay only on that little kiss and things like this, he wants to go deeper. Some yes, others no. It is also not all that are like this.

B4: In my opinion, the majority of times *namorar* is the same thing as sex. Because when a boy begins to *namorar* he already wants to go deeper.

(Young men, group 1)

PF: And so when they [young people] begin to *namorar* do they have sex, like, is it normal, common?

Many: Yes, most of the time.

G3: Depends also on the people. Some don't like to.

(Young women, group 1)

In the following section, the sexual intercourse experience of the survey participants is examined in detail. Because individuals’ personal sexual experiences were not discussed in the focus groups, most of the specific findings are from the survey.

5.7.1 Experience of Sexual Intercourse

Table 5.10 shows the proportions of the survey participants who reported having had sexual intercourse. A greater proportion of the young men (60%) compared to young women (30%) reported having had sexual intercourse. For both males and females, a larger proportion of those in the older age group have had sex compared to the younger ones (79% of 18-24 year old males compared to 52% of 13-17 year olds; and 48% of older females compared to 22% of the younger ones). These differences, between males and females and the age groups, are as expected and is supported by the most recent Brazilian DHS (BEMFAM, 1996).

Table 5.10 Proportions of Young People Who Have Had Sex, by Gender

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
Ever had sex							
Yes	51.6	78.6	59.6	22.3	47.8	29.9	40.9
No	48.4	21.4♥♥♥	40.4	77.7	52.2♥♥♥	70.1***	59.1
N = 100%	279	117	396	475	201	676	1072*

***p < 0.001 (for significant difference between genders, ages 13-24)
♥♥♥p < 0.001(for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for each gender)
*There were 5 male missing cases from the item about ever having had sex.

5.7.2 Why do young people have sex?

When asked why young people have sex, the participants in the focus groups stated several reasons and these are presented in table 5.11 below. The different reasons are presented in alphabetical order, as it was not possible to identify from the data the order of importance of the reasons. The survey participants’ reasons for their first sexual intercourse in particular, are examined later in this chapter.

Table 5.11 Reasons why young people have sex, as stated in the focus groups

REASONS FOR HAVING SEX	STATED BY:	
	YOUNG PEOPLE	PARENTS
Alcohol – being under the influence		✓
Curiosity	✓	✓
Females want to get pregnant in order to “keep” partner		✓
Immature phase		✓
Innate/Natural sexual desire	✓	✓
Lack of religious values		✓
Media – influence of television in particular	✓	✓
Parents – lack of support and communication and too much control	✓	✓
Partner influence – both females and males pressure their partners to have sex	✓	✓
Peers	✓	✓

5.7.3 Where do young people have sex?

According to the participants in the focus groups, when young people have sex, they do so in a variety of places as shown in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12 Places Where Young People Have Sex, as Stated in the Focus Groups

PLACES WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE SEX	STATED BY:	
	YOUNG PEOPLE	PARENTS
At home – when parents are out	✓	✓
House of a friend – when parents are out	✓	
Inside school building – empty classrooms and toilets	✓	✓
Outside school building but inside the grounds - against the school wall and trees	✓	✓
Outdoors - behind bus stop or building	✓	✓
Youth party - in a dark corner or in an empty room when there are no adults present	✓	

When asked where young people have sex, both young people and parents said “anywhere”. The young women commented that this is especially the case for males (they do not care where it occurs) but that females usually prefer it to happen in a more private and “romantic” place, such as at home. The young men mentioned that the place where it happens depends on each

individual. Some like privacy whilst others get excited doing it “in public”, such as against the school wall or behind a building. “At home” is the most common place where young people have sex and it usually happens at the male’s house and when the parents are out - it does happen at the female’s house too, but this is less common. In fact, some of the young men said that if they were to have sex at the female’s home, they would “get killed”. Some parents do allow their sons to have sex with their girlfriends when they are at home, but this seems unusual (and even rarer in the case of females).

5.7.4 How does sex occur?

Both the young men and women described how sexual intercourse usually takes place. The male is the one who usually initiates physical contact and guides the sexual petting. Depending on how the female reacts, sexual intercourse results or not. However, if the female does not want to have sex and stops his “hand from advancing”, her partner will commonly react:

G8: They get angry. [Boy says to girl]: “you are removing” and [he] also gets angry.

PF: Angry about what?

G9: Angry when we don’t let him [touch girl in certain places or have sex], he gets angry.

G1: They say: “I waited so long for this and today you give me a no”

G9: That is what they do.

(Young women, group 2)

In essence, it is common for young women to be pressured to have sex by young men. However, both the young people and parents mentioned that it is becoming more common for females to make sexual advances:

B1: But now women are more...I think that she is more liberal.

B2: Yes, it is true.

B1: Before it was a big thing...and now the women are [the ones] that come, there are girls that come on to us.

(Young men, group 2)

G3: Because nowadays when we are talking [girls with female friends] the girls come and say “you touched his bottom, how was it?” Today it is like this, before the boy would touch your bottom, nowadays it is the girls who are kissing, touching bottoms.

(Young women, group 2)

The fact that both genders and the parents stated that females have become more “liberal” in terms of their sexuality, is another indication of the inherent gender inequality in sexual attitudes. It was not mentioned that males

are becoming more open, as for them, it is “normal” to take the lead in sex and be sexual.

Some of the young men complained that the young women do not pay as much attention to them as they do to older males. Females generally prefer the “more experienced”:

B4: Because it is very difficult for a boy from our age group,[for] the girls to accept to have sexual relations with us. Because they look for boys with a more elevated age. They come to you and say: “You are only 16, you are not experienced”. And then she goes and looks for boys of 20, with more experience.

(Young men, group 1)

G11: ... I’m sorry, these, these boys of 16, 15 and so, they try...but these of 22 and 24, gosh...

G1: Like, they know where to go to first, these of 16 [do not]...

G7: They [older boys] know how to make you feel comfortable.

G7: Sometimes those of 17 know how to do [only] more or less.

(Young women, group 2)

Despite the apparent changes in the gender differences related to sexuality (i.e. women becoming more “free” to express sexual desire and in choosing their partners), inequality between the sexes is further shown in what usually happens after sex has occurred.

5.7.5 What happens after sex?

After sex has occurred, both the young men and women stated that the males frequently go and tell their friends and “show off” about their experiences. The young men confessed that they even exaggerate and lie to their friends about things they actually did:

B1: ...some [boys] are, some are terrible. They go out with a girl, get off with a girl, and then already go and tell all his friends. What he did, tells even more than what he did, sometimes he didn’t do anything and ends up exaggerating.

B4: Yes, all [the sexual] positions and other things.

B2: Yes, [they say]: “that girl over there asked me”...

B5: [They say to their friends]: “You can go there and give a kiss” and tells the other: “Look, I took her home and other things.”

B2: Just a kiss and already says that he had sex with her.

(Young men, group 1)

Females on the other hand, are more likely to keep their experience to themselves or to tell only one or two close friends. They complained that

because the males tell their friends, they feel guilty and get embarrassed about seeing their partner again - especially when he is with his friends. Females fear what the males tell their male friends and their friends' reactions - some spread the information around the school and call the girls' pejorative names. In fact, the young women explained that due to their fears of males telling their other male friends and consequently being stigmatised, they often 'play hard to get' and do not initiate sex (even though they may desire to have sex).

5.7.6 Age at First Intercourse

The young people in the focus groups were asked to state at what ages they thought young people were starting to have sex. The young women mentioned that females usually start between 14 and 16 years of age, but that they know of cases where this was even earlier, at age 12. In the case of males, they stated that this usually occurs earlier, starting from age 10. The mothers believe that young people in general start to have sex from 11 years onwards. The fathers argued that there was not an exact age as each individual is a different case - some start at age 12 whilst others much later. In general, both the young people and parents know that youth are beginning to have sex early.

In Table 5.13, the distribution of the ages and mean ages at first intercourse of the survey participants are shown. The young men's mean age at first sexual intercourse was significantly younger than of the women (14.0 and 15.8 respectively). This finding is similar to that found by the DHS of 1996 and more recent surveys (BEMFAM, 1996; Silva *et al.*, 2001). In addition, both the young men and women of the younger age group (13-17) experienced their first sexual experience significantly younger than their older counterparts (mean age for the 13-17 year old boys was 13.6 whilst 14.6 for the 18-24, and 14.8 compared to 16.8 for the girls respectively).

Table 5.13 Ages and Mean age at First Sexual Intercourse, by Gender

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
Age at first Intercourse							
12	27.5	12.0	21.4	4.7	1.0	3.0	12.8
13	23.9	17.4	21.4	17.0	4.2	10.9	16.5
14	21.8	21.7	21.8	17.9	3.1	10.9	16.7
15	14.1	16.3	15.0	29.3	7.3	18.8	16.7
16	12.0	13.0	12.4	15.1	26.0	20.3	16.1
17	0.7	17.4	7.3	16.0	24.0	19.8	13.1
18	0.0	1.1	0.4	0.0	19.8	9.4	4.6
19	0.0	1.1	0.4	0.0	10.4	5.0	2.5
20	0.0	0.0▼▼▼	0.0	0.0	4.2▼▼▼	2.0***	0.9
N = 100%	142	92	234	106	96	202	436*
Mean age at first Intercourse	13.6	14.6	14.0	14.8	16.8	15.8	14.8

***p < 0.001 (for significant difference between genders, ages 13-24)
▼▼▼p < 0.001(for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for each gender)
*There were a total of 438 participants (236 males and 202 females) that reported having had sex and only those are included in the table. There are 2 male missing cases from the age at first intercourse item.

Table 5.14 presents the proportions of young men and women who have had ‘early’ sex. This measure was developed to be one of the dependent variables used in the logistic regression analysis presented in chapter 7. ‘Early’ sex was derived from taking the mean age of people who were sexually active, shown in Table 5.13. That is, young men who had ‘early’ sex, are those that had their first sexual intercourse below age 14, whilst for young women, this is below age 16. Those who did not have early sex include all young people who were above age 14 for males and 16 for females, whether or not they had sex. As a result, the proportions of young men and women who had ‘early’ sex are small, 26% for males and 13% for females¹.

¹ Mean age at first sex was chosen to calculate ‘early’ sex because it is commonly used to summarise young people’s age of sexual debut (Zaba *et al.*, 2002). In hindsight, it would have been better to use *median* age at first sex (median age at first sex is the age by which half of all young people surveyed have had sex) instead of mean age, because the median age does not eliminate those who have not had sex from the calculation. In addition, the proportions of young men and women who had ‘early’ sex would have been equal (i.e. 50%). Another way to have had similar proportions of ‘early’ sex for young men and women but at an even ‘earlier’ age (compared to median age) would have been to take the age at which 25% of the young people surveyed had had sex.

Table 5.14 Proportion of Young People Who Have Had ‘Early’ Sex, by Gender

	Young Men			Young Women		
	14-17	18-24	14-24	16-17	18-24	16-24
◆ ‘Early’ sex Below age 14 for males and age 16 for females						
Yes	26.6	23.1	25.5	16.5	7.5	12.9
No	73.4	76.9	74.5	83.6	92.5 ^{♥♥}	87.1
N = 100%	271	117	388*	310	201	511*

^{♥♥}p < 0.001 (for significant difference between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for females)

*There were 7 male and 1 female missing cases from the ‘early’ sex item.

5.7.7 Partner at First Intercourse

Table 5.15 shows information regarding the *partner* at first sexual intercourse of the young people in the survey who reported having had sex. First, in terms of the age of their partners at first intercourse, the majority of the young men’s and women’s partners were older (68% of the males and 86% of the females had sex with an older partner). The mean age of the partners of the males is 15.6, compared to 19.7 of the females. It is interesting that most of the males’ first sexual partner were older. This finding may be because, as found in the in-depth interviews, it is common for males to be ‘seduced’ by a non-virgin older female and for their first sex to occur unexpectedly. In the case of females, it is expected that their first partner would be older, because as the young women in the focus groups said, they prefer males who are older and more experienced.

Table 5.15 Ages and Mean age of Partner at First Sexual Intercourse and Partner Identity, by Gender

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
Age of partner at first intercourse							
Younger	11.3	18.5	14.1	1.9	7.4	4.5	9.7
Same age	19.7	16.3	18.4	6.7	13.7	10.0	14.5
Older	69.0	65.2	67.5	94.4	79.0♥	85.5***	75.8
N = 100%	142	92	234	105	95	200	434*
Mean age of partner at first intercourse	15.1	16.3	15.6	19.4	20.0	19.7	17.5
Who was first sexual partner?							
Someone just or recently met	21.7	16.1	19.5	5.7	3.2	4.5	12.6
Someone known for a while	37.8	36.6	37.3	9.5	10.6	10.1	24.8
“Namorado(a)” (girlfriend/boyfriend)	14.7	25.8	19.1	75.2	53.2	64.8	40.0
Fiancé or wife/husband	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.6	29.8	18.2	8.3
Cousin or other relative	21.0	18.3	19.9	1.0	0.0	0.5	11.0
Female or male prostitute	2.8	1.1	2.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2
Other	2.1	2.2	2.1	1.0		2.0***	2.1
N = 100%	143	93	236	105	3.2♥♥♥ 94	199	435*

***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
♥p < 0.05 ♥♥♥p < 0.001 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for females)
* There are 2 male and 2 female missing cases for age of partner at first intercourse, 3 female missing cases from the item about who was first sexual partner.

The relationship with their first sexual partner also differs significantly between the two genders. The partners of the females were significantly more likely to be a *namorado* (65%) compared to the males (19%). The young men reported more than the women that their partner was someone they were less seriously involved with (for example, 20% of the males had sex with someone they just or recently met, whilst this was the case for only 5% of the females). In contrast, 18% of the young women had sex for the first time with either their *fiancé or husband* whilst this was not the case for any of the men. The males also reported more than the females that they had had sex with a *cousin or other relative* (20% of the males compared to 0.5% of females).

5.7.8 Contraceptive Use at First Intercourse

Table 5.16 shows whether contraception was used at first intercourse and, if so, the method used, as well as the reason why the method was used. A significantly greater proportion of the young men compared to the women did not use any method (44% of males compared to 25% of females). These differences are as expected because, as a greater proportion of young women than men had their first sex with a ‘stable’ partner (shown in Table 5.15), then it is more likely that they would have talked about using contraception with their partner as well as having had the chance to plan and consequently use a method. For those males and females that did use contraception, most reported using a condom (36% and 39% respectively). All other methods were reported more by the young women (for example, 19% of females reported using the pill compared to 9% of males). This latter result is as expected, due to the previous explanation, of relationship type of first partner.

Table 5.16 Use of Contraception at First Intercourse

First Intercourse continued...	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
Any contraceptive method used?							
None	44.8	42.4	43.8	18.9	32.3	25.3	35.2
Condom	35.0	38.0	36.2	46.2	31.3	39.1	37.5
Pill	9.8	7.6	8.9	17.9	20.8	19.3	13.7
Withdrawal	7.7	8.7	8.1	13.2	12.5	12.9	10.3
Other method	1.4	1.1	1.3	2.8	3.1	3.0	2.1
Do not know	1.4	2.2	1.7	0.9	0.0	0.5***	1.1
N = 100%	143	92	235	106	96	202	437*
Why was the method used?							
To protect against pregnancy	14.5	18.9	16.2	29.1	31.2	30.1	22.6
To protect against STIs/AIDS	8.7	7.8	8.3	4.9	2.2	3.6	6.1
To protect against both STIs/AIDS and pregnancy	26.1	26.7	26.3	40.8	28.0	34.7	30.2
No method was used	50.7	46.7	49.1	25.2	38.7	31.6***	41.0
N = 100%	138	90	228	103	93	196	424*

***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
*There is 1 male missing case from the question about use of contraceptive method, and 8 male and 6 female missing cases from the question about why the method was used.

In terms of the reasons why the method was used, most of the young men and women reported that it was to protect against both STIs/AIDS and pregnancy. However, for those that gave only one reason for using the method, pregnancy was more important for both males and females than STIs/AIDS (30% of females and 16% of males). This finding confirms the reports in the focus groups, that the young people are more concerned about avoiding pregnancies than STIs:

PF: Now, are you worried about these [risks] when you have sex?...
 B1: Many times I think that no, right. Many times the person is there [about to have sex], [he]only thinks about it, only about sex really...
 B2: Usually if one thinks about using a condom, it is only in terms of pregnancy, right... for the woman not to become pregnant, right, but not worried about any disease.
 B1: When you are there, I don't think you think about disease, no, only about pregnancy. I myself, it is what I think about, more only about pregnancy.
 B5: I think that if the person goes around giving [having sex]...goes to a party, goes with the intention of having sex, they have to be thinking about all, right, all of the risks, pregnancy, diseases... Must go prepared already [with a condom].
 (Young men, group 2)

The young women argued that they were even more concerned about preventing pregnancy than the men but both genders discussed the importance of preventing both risks (STIs and pregnancy). Nevertheless, the males' discourse above indicates that despite young people's awareness of the importance of prevention, it does not necessarily mean that they do engage in preventative behaviour (also confirmed by the low proportion of young people who used a condom at first intercourse, shown in Table 5.16).

5.7.9 Experience of First Intercourse

In addition to age, partner information and contraceptive behaviour at first intercourse, it is important to investigate the circumstances in which the first sexual intercourse took place, as well as the feelings that young people relate to it. In Table 5.17, the young peoples' willingness, reasons, and views about timing of their first intercourse are presented. First, the majority of both the young men (85%) and women (80%) reported that they and their partners were willing to have sex when they had their first intercourse. However, the females were more likely to report being persuaded by their partner than the males (17% compared to 4%). This is also supported by the fact that a greater proportion of young men (10%) than women (1%) stated that they had persuaded their

partner to have sex. “Persuasion” to have sex is a form of pressure and the findings indicate that females are more prone to this than males.

Table 5.17 Willingness, Assertiveness, Regret and Sexual Competence at First Intercourse

First Intercourse continued...	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
Willingness at first intercourse							
I forced my partner to have sex	0.7	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
I had to persuade my partner to have sex	8.3	12.0	9.8	1.9	0.0	1.0	5.8
We were both willing to have sex	88.2	80.4	85.2	75.5	86.0	80.4	83.0
My partner persuaded me to have sex	2.8	6.5	4.2	19.8	12.9	16.6	9.9
My partner forced me to have sex	0.0	1.1	0.4	2.8	1.1	2.0***	1.2
N = 100%	144	92	236	106	93	199	435*
Why had first intercourse?							
Was curious	17.0	11.2	14.8	6.1	1.1	3.6	9.7
Was “in love”	5.7	6.7	6.1	30.3	34.0	32.1	18.0
Wanted to lose virginity	11.4	7.9	10.0	4.0	3.2	3.6	7.1
Was the natural progression of relationship	22.0	23.6	22.6	30.3	37.2	33.7	27.7
Just happened	37.6	39.3	38.3	23.2	19.2	21.2	30.5
People my age were doing it	3.6	7.9	5.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.8
Wanted to please my partner	0.7	1.1	0.9	4.0	3.2	3.6	2.1
I was drunk or high	2.1	2.3	2.2	0.0	1.1	0.5	1.4
I was forced to	0.0	0.0	0	2.0	1.1	1.6***	0.7
N = 100%	141	89	230	99	94	193	423*
Was it the right time?							
No, too early	43.3	27.5	37.1	55.7	33.3	45.1	40.8
No, too late	5.0	12.1	7.8	1.9	3.1	2.5	5.3
Yes, about right	51.8	60.4♥	55.2	42.5	63.5♥♥	53.5*	53.9
N = 100%	141	91	232	106	96	202	434*

*p < 0.05 ***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
♥p < 0.05 ♥♥p < 0.01 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for each gender)
*There are 3 female missing cases from the item about willingness at first intercourse, 6 male and 9 female missing cases from question about why had sexual intercourse, 4 male missing cases from the question about whether first sex was at right time.

The two genders reported significantly different reasons why they had their first sexual intercourse. The main reason for the males was that it *just happened* whilst for the females it was *the natural progression of the relationship*. In general, the young men were more likely than the women to have had sex because they were curious (15% compared to 4%), wanted to lose their virginity (10% compared to 4%), just happened (38% compared to 21%), people their age were doing it (5% compared to 0%), or were drunk or high (2% compared to 0.5%). Young women on the other hand, reported more that they were in love (32% compared to 6%), it was the natural progression of the relationship (34% compared to 23%), they wanted to please their partner (4% compared to 1%) or were forced to (2% compared to 0%). Interestingly, the differences in the reasons for first sexual intercourse reported by the young men and women highlight how the two genders view sexual intercourse differently. For men, their first intercourse happened generally for more 'individualistic' reasons (such as curiosity and desire to lose virginity) and peer pressure, whilst for women, the reasons were more related to 'intimacy', or their relationship with their partner (for example, because they were in love or wanted to please their partner).

In terms of the last variable in Table 5.17, first intercourse having occurred at the 'right time', only about half of young men (55%) and women (54%) answered this positively. A significantly greater proportion of females compared to males stated that it was *too early* (45% compared to 37%) whilst more men (8%) than women (3%) reported that it was *too late*. It is interesting that quite a large proportion of both genders believe that their first sex was *too early*. This is important, because it shows that many young people are having their first sex at a time when they do not feel ready. For both genders, the older ones (18-24) were significantly more likely than the younger ones (13-17) to have reported that their first intercourse occurred at the *right* time (60% of older males compared to 52% of younger ones, and 64% and 43% respectively). Therefore, *older age* is associated with sex occurring at the *right* time.

5.7.10 Last Sexual Intercourse

In Table 5.18, the timing of young people’s last sexual intercourse, partner information and use of contraception are shown. Young women compared to young men were significantly more likely to have had their last sexual intercourse recently. For example, 42% of the females had sex *within last week* compared to 11% of males. Similarly, 39% of the young men had their last intercourse *more than a year ago* as opposed to 12% of women. Both the males and the females in the older age group had had sex more recently than their younger counterparts (for example, 15% of the 18-24 year old men had sex within the last week compared to 8% of the 13-17 year olds).

Table 5.18 Time of Last Sexual Intercourse, Partner Information and Use of Contraception

Last Intercourse	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
When was last sexual intercourse?							
Within last week	8.4	15.2	11.1	26.7	57.9	41.5	25.1
Within last month	12.6	25.0	17.5	27.6	14.7	21.5	19.3
Within last year	32.9	33.7	33.2	33.3	15.8	25.0	29.4
More than a year ago	46.2	26.1♥♥	38.3	12.4	11.6♥♥♥	12.0***	26.2
N = 100%	143	92	235	105	95	200	435*
Who was last sexual partner?							
Someone just or recently met	23.2	19.3	21.7	3.9	2.1	3.0	13.1
Someone known for a while	30.3	37.5	33.0	6.8	6.3	6.5	20.8
“Namorado(a)” (girlfriend/boyfriend)	24.5	30.7	27.0	69.9	38.5	54.8	39.9
Fiancé or wife/husband	0.0	1.1	0.4	17.5	51.1	33.7	15.9
Cousin or other relative	14.8	5.7	11.3	1.0	0.0	0.5	6.3
Female or male prostitute	3.5	2.3	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.6
Other	3.5	3.4	3.5	1.0	2.1♥♥	1.5***	2.6
N = 100%	142	88	230	103	96	199	429*
Any contraceptive method used?							
None	24.5	20.5	22.9	15.5	20.8	18.1	20.7
Condom	53.9	65.9	58.4	43.7	28.1	36.2	48.1
Pill	14.0	10.2	12.6	22.3	29.2	25.6	18.6
Withdrawal	4.9	2.3	3.9	13.6	15.6	14.6	8.8
Other method	1.4	1.1	1.3	3.9	6.3	5.0	3.0
Do not know	1.4	0.0	0.87	1.0	0.0	0.5***	0.7
N = 100%	143	88	231	103	96	199	430*

***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
 ♥♥p < 0.01 ♥♥♥p < 0.001 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for each gender)
 *There is 1 male and 2 female missing case from the item about “when was last sexual intercourse”, 6 male and 3 female missing cases from the item about “who was last sexual partner”, and 5 male and 3 female missing cases from the item about use of contraceptive method.

The difference observed between males and females in the timing of their last sexual intercourse is large and makes one wonder whether the respondents were being truthful. However, the relationship with their last sexual partner provides a possible explanation for the difference. In essence, because young women's last partner was significantly more likely to be a "namorado(a)" (55%) or fiancé/husband (34%) compared to young men (27% had sex with a "namorada(o)" and 0.4% with a fiancé/wife), they are more likely to be having sex frequently - due to being in 'stable' relationship. Who the partner was at last intercourse, also differed significantly between the older (18-24) and younger (13-17) females: the older ones were more likely to have had sex with a fiancé/husband (51%) compared to the younger ones (18%).

In terms of use of contraception at last intercourse, a smaller proportion of young men and women did not use any contraceptive method (23% of males and 18% of females) compared to their first intercourse (44% of males and 25% of females). This improvement is perhaps due to young people being more prepared, contraceptive wise, at their last intercourse (compared to first), since they are already sexually active and therefore know that they are likely to have sex again. Condom use by males was much higher at last intercourse (59% compared to 36% at first intercourse) but similar for females (36% compared to 39% at first intercourse). In essence, the females were more likely to be using a different method at their last intercourse besides the condom in comparison to their first intercourse (for example, use of the pill increased from 19% to 26%). Again, this is probably due to them being better prepared (i.e. taking the pill) at their last intercourse, because they are already sexually active. In addition, the result that condom use amongst females did not increase compared to their first intercourse, even though it did for the males, shows that this is likely due to who their partner was. As the women's partners were more likely to be someone they were having a 'stable' relationship with compared to the men, then it is understandable that their pill use would have increased, since condom use is synonymous with less committed relationships, as explained by the focus groups.

5.7.11 Number of Sexual Partners

In Table 5.19, the number of sexual partners that the young people have had in the last year before the survey and in their lifetime so far are shown. In general, young men reported significantly more partners in the last year and in their lifetime than the women. The majority of females have had one sexual partner in both the last year and lifetime (76% and 71% respectively), whilst for the males, this is the case for only a minority (16% in the last year and 14% in lifetime). These findings are similar to those found by the DHS of 1996 (Franca, 1999).

Table 5.19 Number of Sexual Partners in the Last Year and in Lifetime

Number of sexual partners	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
In the last year							
0	46.5	27.8	39.2	12.6	11.6	12.1	26.7
1	13.4	18.9	15.5	72.8	80.0	76.3	43.5
2	13.4	21.1	16.4	10.7	3.2	7.1	12.1
3	13.4	13.3	13.4	1.9	2.1	2.0	8.1
4	9.2	4.4	7.3	0.0	1.1	0.5	4.2
5 or more	4.2	14.4♥♥	8.2	1.9	2.1	2.0***	2.0
N = 100%	142	90	232	103	95	198	430*
Mean number of partners in last year	1.4	1.9	1.6	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.4
Lifetime							
1	23.6	13.5	19.7	68.0	73.4	70.6	43.2
2	16.4	9.0	13.5	14.6	14.9	14.7	14.1
3	13.6	20.2	16.2	8.7	4.3	6.6	11.7
4	18.6	11.2	15.7	3.9	2.1	3.1	9.9
5-9	20.7	30.3	24.5	4.9	2.1	3.6	14.8
10 or more	7.1	15.7♥	10.5	0.0	3.2	1.5***	6.3
N = 100%	140	89	229	103	94	197	426*
Mean number of partners in lifetime	3.2	3.8	3.4	1.6	1.5	1.6	2.6

***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
♥p < 0.05 ♥♥p < 0.01 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for males)
*There were 13 male and 7 female missing cases from the item about partners in the last year, and 7 male and 5 female missing cases from the item about partners in lifetime.

Consistent with Table 5.18, over a third of young men have not had sex in the last year, and this is probably because they are less likely than females to be in a 'stable' relationship. The older males (18-24) were significantly more

likely to report greater numbers of sexual partners than the younger ones (13-17) as might be expected. For example, 14% of the 18-24 year olds compared to 4% of those in the younger age group reported having have had 5 or more sexual partners in the last year.

5.8 Verbal Sexual Communication With Partner

Young people's verbal sexual communication with their partner is an essential component of a healthier sexuality because when a couple talk about sex-related issues openly, they are more likely to use contraception (e.g. Hillier *et al.*, 1998; Saul *et al.*, 2000; Stone & Ingham, 2002;). The young people surveyed were asked to indicate all topics on a list they had talked about with their current or most recent romantic partner (not necessarily a sexual partner) and Table 5.20 shows the results in rank order.

Table 5.20 Rank Order of Sex-related Topics Talked About With Romantic Partner and Distribution of Number of Topics Talked About

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
Sex-related topics talked about							
Pregnancy	41.6	62.0 ^{♥♥♥}	47.8	56.4	57.1	56.6 ^{**}	53.3
Condoms	42.5	52.0	45.2	39.9	40.8	40.2	42.1
When to start having sex	34.9	51.0 ^{♥♥}	39.8	39.9	37.0	38.9	39.2
Sexual pleasure	33.1	51.0 ^{♥♥}	38.4	33.7	44.6 [♥]	37.2	37.7
STIs and HIV /AIDS	28.3	46.0 ^{♥♥}	33.6	31.2	32.1	31.5	32.3
Menstruation	15.9	33.0 ^{♥♥♥}	21.0	33.9	30.4	32.7 ^{***}	28.4
Contraceptive methods	17.6	32.0 ^{♥♥}	22.0	24.9	36.4 ^{♥♥}	28.7 [*]	26.2
Sexual experience of partner	13.7	20.0	15.6	24.2	19.0	22.5 [*]	19.9
Sexual technique	16.3	28.0 [♥]	19.8	11.8	20.1 ^{♥♥}	14.5 [*]	16.5
Masturbation	11.2	23.0 ^{♥♥}	14.7	15.2	19.6	16.6	15.9
Sexual experience of young person	15.9	28.0 [♥]	19.5	5.8	8.2	6.6 ^{***}	11.4
N =100%	232	100	332	380	184	564	896*

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
♥p < 0.05 ♥♥p < 0.01 ♥♥♥p < 0.001 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for each gender)
*There were 11 male and 4 female missing cases from the item about sex-related topics talked about with partner. In addition, 58 males and 108 females who answered "I have never had a boyfriend/girlfriend" to question 97 of the questionnaire were excluded from the two items in the table.

The most frequent three topics that young people have talked about with their most recent romantic partner are first *pregnancy*, followed by *condoms* and *when to start having sex*. Nevertheless, the proportions of young people that have actually talked about these topics are a minority. For example, in the case of talking about condoms, only 45% of young men and 40% of women reported that they had done so. In general, verbal sexual communication between couples, according to the survey participants, does not occur frequently.

The topics young people have least talked about are *masturbation* and *sexual experience of young person*. Young men were significantly more likely to have talked about their own sexual experience than women (20% compared to 7%). Similarly, a significantly greater proportion of women have talked about their partner's sexual experience than men (22% compared to 16%). These findings suggest that even though this communication is low for both sexes, men are able to talk about their own experiences more than women. This is probably due to what was previously mentioned by the focus groups, that it is more acceptable for males to have sexual experiences than females and therefore, it is more 'easily' talked about and admitted to.

Other significant differences between the males and females were found which further highlight the existing gender differences. For example, young women were significantly more likely to have talked about pregnancy (57% compared to 48%), menstruation (33% compared to 21%), and contraceptive methods (29% compared to 22%) than the men. A possible explanation for these differences is that for females, these topics are regarded as more important and relevant than for men and thus talked about more frequently. Conversely, males talked significantly more than females about sexual technique (20% compared to 15%) and this again may be due to it being more acceptable for men to be 'sexual' and thus verbalise their desire for pleasure than women. For both genders, there were significant differences found between the older (18-24 year olds) and younger ones (13-17 year olds). In essence, the older men and women were more likely to have talked about different sex topics than the younger ones. Perhaps this difference is because the older ones know more about sex, are more aware of the importance of

talking to their partner, have greater experience, and are more mature and consequently less embarrassed about talking about these topics.

5.9 Pregnancy

Young women becoming pregnant and having children, is a common occurrence in Samambaia town, according to the young people and the parents in the focus groups. Nevertheless, both of them expressed negative views about youth pregnancy. The males talked about the difficulties they would face if their partner became pregnant. They mentioned that it would be difficult for them to financially support them, since they are studying and do not have a job. They reported that if a female did get pregnant, they would have to support her and the child, as they believe they should be responsible for the pregnancy. In that case, they said they would have to get a job and do whatever they could to help bring up the child. They also mentioned that they would have to be prepared to accept the criticisms that they would receive from their parents and friends, for getting their partner pregnant.

The young women reported that due to the fear of parental reaction, many females decide to have an abortion. It is common for parents to warn them that if they get pregnant, they will be 'kicked out' of the house. The females also said that pregnancy would make them lose their freedoms such as being able to go out with their friends, because they would have to stay home and take care of the baby. They mentioned that their "whole life" would change and that it would be like "a child taking care of a child" and thus inappropriate. The parents had similar views as the young people concerning adolescent pregnancy. In general, they see it as a problem for the young people involved as well as for themselves, as they often become responsible for supporting the child.

So what usually happens when a young women gets pregnant? Two key things were reported as commonly occurring if the female decides to have the child: the parents of the females usually help bring up the child and the father of the child disappears:

F4: So after the child comes, he [young boy] doesn't want to take responsibility at all. So what is happening? Thousands and thousands of young girls with their children being supported by the grandparents, or even having to be responsible alone, because the father does not have a commitment, a responsibility.

(Fathers, group 2)

M3: Because young boys, lets say, gets a girl to date, he asks [her parents], or they date without anyone knowing when they meet, right? From there, everything happens. [They] already go to [sex], the girl already goes, like she [the other mother] said there, already gets pregnant. The boy doesn't take responsibility. Nowadays, the father of the child does not want to support the child, so the girl gets that stomach [pregnancy] and her mother, if she doesn't want to see her [daughter] give the child away or do something else, helps her bring it up.

(Mothers, group 1)

It does not seem to be a common occurrence for parents to banish young people from home. In fact, the parents mentioned that they warn young people of this to scare them but do not usually do it.

It is interesting to note that the young men in the focus groups thought it was important to take responsibility for their partner's pregnancy, but in reality, it seems that it is common for males not to do so. This controversy is probably because it would be hard for them to admit in a group, that they would 'abandon' the female, because this would not be a 'socially acceptable' thing to say. In some cases, when the father of the child does take responsibility, the parents of the young people involved may wish for them to get married (especially the parents of the female). Nevertheless, it became clear that for both the fathers and the mothers in the focus groups, marriage is not necessarily the best option and that it is in fact a controversial issue. Some parents argued that their son or daughter should not get married if the partner is not a good person, if the couple does not really care about each other, and if they are not mature enough to cope with the responsibilities of marriage. Other parents however, believe that marriage is the best solution for the unborn child, who would otherwise not have a proper family.

In Table 5.21, the proportions of young men and women in the survey that have experienced a pregnancy and have had a child are shown. About 21% of the sexually active young women have been pregnant, and this is significantly higher among the older ones (33% of the 18-24 year olds compared to 9% of the 13-17 year olds). A slightly smaller proportion of females (17%) reported having a child and this decrease in proportion (compared to

21% who have been pregnant) may be because some were pregnant at the time of the survey, or could have had a miscarriage or an abortion before. In general, the findings in Table 5.21 show that becoming pregnant is a reality for many young women in Samambaia Town.

Table 5.21 Pregnancies and Children

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
Ever been or got someone pregnant							
Yes	5.6	7.1	6.2	8.7	33.3	20.6	12.9
No	94.4	92.9	93.8	91.3	66.7▼▼▼	79.4***	87.1
N = 100%	142	85	227	103	96	199	426
Do you have children?							
Yes	2.0	3.3	2.5	5.7	28.7	16.6	9.0
No	98.0	96.7	97.5	94.3	71.3▼▼▼	83.4***	91.0
N = 100%	146	90	236	105	94	199	435

***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
▼▼▼p < 0.001 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for females)
*There were 9 male and 3 female missing cases from the item about ever been pregnant, and 3 female missing cases from the item about “do you have children?”

According to Table 5.21, the young men were significantly less likely to report either a pregnancy (6%) or having a child (3%) than the women. This is as expected as females are the ones that get pregnant and because young men frequently have sex outside of a ‘committed’ relationship, it is possible that many did not even know that their partner became pregnant. In addition, as reported in the focus groups, females are commonly left by their partner to take care of their child alone and so perhaps some of the males did not want to admit a pregnancy or child when filling out the questionnaire.

5.10 Conclusions of Chapter 5

This chapter has provided a wealth of information about several aspects of young people’s sexuality in Samambaia Town, using data from the focus groups and the survey. In general, the results have shown that in relation to sexual health, there are many interesting findings. In summary, despite young people

being well informed generally about sexual-risks and contraceptive methods, their sexual knowledge about STIs in particular is poor. It is also clear that their sexual knowledge and attitudes do not always guide their sexual behaviour. For example, even though many of the young people know of the importance of using condoms and believe they should be used, only small proportions reported using condoms at their first and last intercourse. Condom use is hindered because of many factors. First, the gender issues are complex. Because females fear stigmatisation, they usually do not carry condoms and are not assertive in their sexual relations. Condom use is also poor because young people are frequently unprepared when sex occurs; they do not worry about STIs as much as pregnancy; negative attitudes towards condoms affecting pleasure and breaking are prevalent; and factors such as money and condom availability play a role. In addition, couples in a 'committed' relationship are likely to stop using condoms altogether because of the common belief that condoms communicate a lack of trust in one's partner.

In this environment of poor condom use, many of the young men and women are having sex, and this is occurring at earlier ages. It is also common for the sexually active young men to have multiple partners. Many of the young people believe that their first intercourse did not occur at the 'right' time and for the majority this was *too early*. There is also great need for improvement in the verbal sexual communication within couple relationships. At least, both genders reported a desire to talk to their partners more. Finally, the high pregnancy rates further confirm the 'risk' of this population. In general, the findings presented in this chapter have shown that the sexuality of young people in Samambaia demonstrate features which are a cause for concern. Specific policy implications of the results are discussed in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

Chapter 6: Setting the Context of Parental Influence

The aim of this chapter is to set the context of parental influence, using data mainly from the focus groups and survey (together with some quotes from the in-depth interviews), by describing the characteristics of the following factors: verbal sexual communication, parental sexual attitudes, quality of relationship between young people and parents and non-verbal sexual communication. The material presented is important for two reasons: First, it provides novel background information of the parental influence factors, which have scarcely been studied in a Brazilian setting. Second, the data allow for a greater understanding of the parental factors, which is essential for exploring their influence on young people's sexuality, presented in the next two chapters. The information is presented separately by gender and age of the young people as in Chapter 5. The statistical significant results presented were tested by chi-square tests.

6.1 Verbal Sexual Communication

In order to have a clear picture of the verbal sexual communication that takes place between young people and parents in Samambaia Town, it is important to ask several questions, including: How does it occur? When does it occur? What is talked about? To what extent? What is not talked about and why not? Each of these facets are examined next.

6.1.1 How and When does Verbal Sexual Communication Occur?

Most of the young people and parents in the focus groups stated that they do not actually 'talk' about sex with each other. This is because 'talking' implies a two-way dialogue about sex and this rarely occurs. However, from both the parents and young people's examples, it is clear that verbal communication about sex, to one extent or another, does take place in the home. 'Conversations' as such are rare, but 'comments' related to sex are more frequent and are usually non-specific, short or a warning:

G6: At home, my father, he is like, he almost doesn't talk, he comes home and goes to sleep...He doesn't know how to come like, he only comes talking about pregnancy: "You have to be careful". That is it, nothing else.

G2: My mother says like this: "I don't have anyone's key [virginity], it is yours, you give it to who you want, but be careful with what you are going to do because afterwards, you will have to cope alone with the consequences".

(Young women, group 1)

In general, it is more common for parents to do the talking, not young people. Another common feature of parents' discourse when talking about sex, is that they use the examples of others outside of the home to convey their messages:

F1: ...I always tell my daughters the following, I always try to tell this to them, right, even so not directly speaking, but I give examples of others, what happens with others so that it becomes reality really. That they will live...it will be very difficult. I give hints regarding others so that they take it and (F4 interrupts)

F4: As an example.

F1: As an example. I always tell stories, right. I give examples from outside so that they realise.

(Fathers, group 2)

In some cases, young people may actually try to initiate a conversation about sex with their parents, but they said that parents frequently ignore them or change the subject. The parents however, also mentioned that this happens to them - i.e. when they try to talk about sex with their children, they are often 'cut short'.

Despite the general pattern of how verbal sexual communication occurs, it is important to highlight that this generally varies according to gender of both the parents and the young people. In most families, mothers are more likely to talk to young people about sex than fathers are. However, mothers feel more comfortable talking to females than to males and are thus more likely to do so with their daughters. When young men do have communication, they are more likely to have it with their fathers. Both the fathers and the young men mentioned that they feel more comfortable talking to each other than they do to either their daughters or mothers respectively. However, as fathers are less likely to talk about sex than mothers, young men have fewer opportunities for communication with either of their parents, than the women do. Therefore, males are generally in a worse situation than females, in terms of the extent of

verbal sexual communication that they have with their parents. These gender differences in verbal sexual communication have also been found by other studies (e.g. Baumeister *et al.*, 1995; Fisher, 1990).

The young women also mentioned that they feel more comfortable talking to their mothers about sex than they do with their fathers - this is also partly due to fathers being less likely to talk about sex anyway. They stated that when communication does take place with fathers, there is a difference between the type of conversation that they have than that with mothers. In essence, mothers are more likely to give advice, whilst fathers warn them:

G6: Ah, she [step-mother] is not my mother, no, but she gives me advice, she says like this, that there is no point in rushing [to have sex], because she says that the age that we are at, when she was this age, there was no rushing.

G4: The mothers talk more about this, but the fathers no. They say: "No, my daughter, no".

G6: They only think about themselves: "Oh, if you get pregnant, you are going to have to take care [of the child yourself]". The mother no, the mother gives advice. They no [fathers], they only think about pregnancy, nothing else.

(Young women, group 1)

When fathers talk to young men about sex, they do so in a more 'liberal' fashion than they do with young women. They are generally more likely to tell dirty jokes, speak about sex in a light-hearted manner, talk about sexual experiences, and even encourage sex:

FP: What do they talk about [young men with fathers]?

G9: They talk, because with the man it is more liberal, more normal.

G8: Many times, there are cases when the fathers say to their sons: "Gosh my son, you haven't been with a girl, aren't you a man?". Then [father] calls the boy a fag, and other things. And then sometimes, for this exact reason, they [boys] keep going after girls.

(Young women, group 1)

Therefore, the difference in how fathers talk to their sons and daughters, helps perpetuate the gender inequality that exists in relation to young people's sexuality, discussed in the previous chapter.

When does verbal sexual communication usually occur? According to both the young people and parents in the focus groups, there are specific situations when it is more likely to occur, shown in Table 6.1. The data show that verbal sexual communication between young people and parents often

happen as a result of a specific situation (e.g. when watching a sex-related scene on TV; when parents discover young person is dating), which plays the role of a stimulus. It rarely occurs in a formal, purposeful manner – i.e. seldom do young people and parents ‘sit down’ to have a conversation about sex.

Table 6.1 Specific Situations When Verbal Sexual Communication between Young People and Parents Occur, as Stated in the Focus Groups

SITUATIONS WHEN COMMUNICATION OCCURS	STATED BY:	
	YOUNG PEOPLE	PARENTS
When watching a sex-related scene on TV	✓	✓
When talking about other people	✓	✓
When young women has her first period	✓	✓
When young women gets pregnant	✓	✓
When parents discover young person is dating	✓	✓
When young person is about to go out (for example, with friends at night)	✓	✓

6.1.2 Content and Extent of Verbal Sexual Communication

When discussing verbal sexual communication in the focus groups, young people and parents provided examples of different conversations that they had had with each other. As a result, it was possible to examine the content of the communication – i.e. what is actually talked about. A variety of sexual topics emerged from the analysis and are depicted in Table 6.2, in alphabetical order.

Table 6.2 Sexual Topics Talked About Between Young People and Parents, as Stated in the Focus Groups

SEXUAL TOPICS	STATED BY:	
	YOUNG PEOPLE	PARENTS
AIDS and STIs	✓	✓
Condoms	✓	✓
Contraceptive Methods	✓	
Dating/Couple Relationships	✓	✓
Gender issues related to sex		✓
Masturbation		✓
Parents' own sexual experiences	✓	✓
Physical intimacy (e.g. kissing and petting)		✓
Pornography	✓	
Pregnancy/Having babies	✓	✓
Puberty: Menstruation and body changes		✓
Sexual intercourse	✓	✓
Sexual organs		✓
Virginity	✓	

To discover more details about the content and extent of verbal sexual communication, the survey participants were asked to indicate which topics they had talked about with each of their parents. The results are shown in Tables 6.3 and 6.4. Table 6.3 shows young people’s verbal sexual communication experience with their mothers. The general finding is that although communication was low, the females reported more communication with their mothers than the males. When asked about the frequency of sex talk, 14% of young women compared to 5% of young men stated that they do so *often*. More females also reported having talked about more sex-related topics than males – for example, 14% of young women compared to 4% of men indicated that they had talked about 7-10 topics. These findings are congruent with the focus groups findings presented earlier.

Table 6.3 Extent and Content of Verbal Sexual Communication with Mother and Derived Measure

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
Frequency of sex talk with mother							
Never	46.8	43.2	45.8	30.6	33.5	31.5	36.8
Rarely	27.3	22.0	25.8	24.5	25.4	24.7	25.1
Sometimes	19.9	21.2	20.3	29.4	25.9	28.3	25.3
Often	4.6	6.8	5.3	14.3	13.2	13.9	10.7
Does not apply	1.4	6.8 [♥]	3.0	1.3	2.0	1.5 ^{***}	2.1
N = 100%	282	118	400	470	197	667	1067*
Number of sex-related topics talked about with mother							
0 topics	24.5	20.9	23.4	9.5	15.9	11.4	15.9
1 – 2 topics	33.0	29.6	32.0	31.8	32.3	32.0	32.0
3 – 4 topics	20.6	30.4	23.4	25.0	21.9	24.1	23.8
5 – 6 topics	12.4	8.7	11.3	17.8	15.4	17.1	15.0
7 – 10 topics	3.9	5.2	4.3	14.2	12.4	13.7	10.2
Does not apply	5.7	5.2	5.5	1.7	2.0	1.8 ^{***}	1.8
N = 100%	282	115	397	472	201	673	1070*
Sex-related topics talked about with mother							
'Namoro' (Dating)	61.4	65.5	62.6	80.1	71.6 [♥]	77.6 ^{***}	72.0
Pregnancy	26.2	36.2 [♥]	29.2	60.4	57.7	59.6 ^{***}	48.3
Condoms	40.8	49.1	43.2	36.9	29.4	34.6 ^{**}	37.8
Sexual development	7.8	7.8	7.8	56.1	37.8 ^{♥♥♥}	50.7 ^{***}	34.7
STIs and HIV/AIDS	31.6	31.0	31.4	35.2	31.8	34.2	33.2
Contraceptive methods	8.2	11.2	9.1	26.7	30.9	27.9 ^{***}	20.9
When to start having sex	15.6	11.2	14.3	23.9	24.9	24.2 ^{***}	20.5
Sexual intercourse (sexual act)	7.8	13.0	9.3	12.7	11.4	12.3	11.2
Mother's own sexual experiences	5.3	6.0	5.5	13.4	14.9	13.8 ^{***}	10.7
Masturbation	8.9	8.7	8.8	7.4	6.0	7.1	7.7
Does not apply	5.7	5.2	5.5	1.7	2.0	1.8 ^{**}	1.8
N = 100%	282	115	397	472	201	673	1070*
◆Extent of sex talk with mother							
'Rarely'	38.4	34.8	37.4	24.5	30.5	26.3	30.4
'Sometimes'	42.4	42.6	42.4	45.2	43.7	44.7	43.9
'Often'	13.2	13.0	13.1	28.1	23.4	26.7	21.7
Does not apply	6.1	9.6	7.1	2.1	2.5	2.3 ^{***}	4.1
N = 100%	281	115	396	469	197	666	1062*

^{**}p < 0.01 ^{***}p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
[♥]p < 0.05 ^{♥♥♥}p < 0.001 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for each gender)
*There were 1 male and 9 female missing cases from the question about the frequency of sex talk with mother, 4 male and 3 female missing cases from the two items about sexual topics talked about with mother, and 5 male and 10 female missing case from the measure of extent of sex talk with mother.
◆ This derived measure was developed by adding the answers to the questions about frequency of sex communication with mother (scored as: never=1, rarely=2, sometimes=3, often=4) and number of sex related topics talked about with mother (scored as: 0 topics=0, 1-2 topics=1, 3-4 topics=2 and 5-6 topics=3, 7-10 topics=4). Chi-square test and principal component analysis also showed these two variables to be highly related. Those participants that had scored from 1 to 2 in the addition of two questions were classified as 'rarely', 3 to 5 as 'sometimes' and 6 to 8 as 'often'.

Interestingly, the proportion of young people that stated they had *never* talked to their mother about sex was much greater than those who reported having talked about 0 topics. For example, 46% of males reported *never* having talked about sex, but only 23% indicated that *none* of the topics listed on the questionnaire had been talked about. This difference explicitly demonstrates the importance of asking whether specific sex-related topics have ever been talked about instead of just the *frequency of sex communication* (Miller et al. 1999). In essence, this difference indicates that what is considered to be 'sex talk' can vary greatly and thus specifying the sex topics is a more accurate measure of the extent of sex communication that takes place. In general therefore, only a minority of young men and women (23% and 11% respectively) have not had *any* verbal sexual communication with their mothers.

The third item in Table 6.3 shows the actual proportion of young men and women that have communicated about a variety of sex-related topics with their mothers. The topics are presented in rank order and it is therefore possible to see which are the most and less talked about topics. For example, for both the males and females, dating – *namoro* – is the most commonly talked about topic - 63% of males and 78% of females have talked about *namoro* at some point with their mothers. *Masturbation* on the other hand is the least talked about topic, with only 9% of males and 7% of females reporting that they have ever done so with their mother.

For most of the topics listed in Table 6.3, the females were more likely to report that they had talked about them with their mothers than males. Interestingly however, in the case of talking about *condoms* the reverse is found to be true – 43% of males compared to 35% of females reported that they had talked about condoms with their mothers. Perhaps this difference is because *condoms* are viewed by both mothers and young people as a 'male method' and so more relevant for men and consequently talked more about with them. This finding not only supports the results associated to condom-use discussed in the previous chapter, but also shows that mothers too play a role in perpetuating the gender-bias that exists related to condoms.

Significant age differences for some of the topics are shown for males and females. The 18-24 year old men reported significantly more than the 13-17 year olds that they had talked about *pregnancy* with their mothers (36% compared to 26%). This difference might be expected, as it would be natural for mothers to perceive their 'older' sons more likely to be sexually active and thus warn them more about pregnancy than the younger ones. For females, the younger ones (13-17) reported significantly more to have talked about *namoro* (80% compared to 72%) and sexual development (56% compared to 38%) than the older ones (18-24). These differences may be related to recall bias, as these two topics may have been talked about more recently by the younger ones and are thus remembered and reported more.

The last item in Table 6.3 *extent of sex talk with mother* is the derived measure that was developed to be one of the independent parental influence variables used in the logistic regression analysis presented in the following chapter (see details of the measure below the Table)¹. This item takes into consideration both the stated *frequency* of communication, as well as the *number* of sex-related topics talked about and is therefore believed to be a better measure of the 'extent' of sex talk between mothers and young people. In accordance with the other items in the Table, the proportions shown for the developed measure also confirms that young women communicate significantly more about sex with their mothers than men do (e.g. 27% of females talk '*often*' compared to 13% of males).

In terms of talking about sex with fathers, Table 6.4 shows that the opposite pattern is true: males are significantly more likely to do so than females. Though most young men and women stated they *never* talk to their fathers about sex, this was much greater for females – 75% compared to 43%. Also, a greater proportion of young men than women indicated that they had talked about 3 to 10 sex-related topics (28% and 8% respectively). (Similar to Table 6.3, a smaller proportion of young people indicated they had talked about

¹ In addition to conducting Principal Component Analysis to develop the scales used in this study, all scales passed the Cronbach Alpha Reliability test – i.e. an Alpha coefficient greater than 0.7 was obtained for all scales.

0 topics with their father, compared to those who indicated they had *never* talked about sex).

A greater proportion of young men are also significantly more likely to have talked more to their fathers about all the sex-related topics than women. For both genders, and similar to the findings in Table 6.3, the most commonly talked about topic with fathers is dating – *namoro* – (42% of men and 30% of women). However, in terms of the topic least talked about, this differed for men and women: it was *contraceptive methods* (6%) for males and *masturbation* (1%) for females. This difference demonstrates how some topics are regarded as being more 'relevant' and 'appropriate' for one gender than the other.

The older males (18-24) reported significantly more than the younger ones (13-17) that they had talked about their *father's own sexual experiences* (15% compared to 8%). This difference is probably because as young men get older, they are likely to be more sexually active and hence fathers feel more comfortable in talking to them about their own sexual experiences. In terms of the females, a greater proportion of the younger ones reported having talked about *namoro* with their fathers (33% compared to 23%). This finding is similar to that found in Table 6.3 and is perhaps due to the younger females remembering more than the older ones.

At the bottom of Table 6.4, the derived measure of *extent of sex talk with father* (derived as for Table 6.3) confirms that young men communicate significantly more about sex with their fathers than women do (31% of males communicate 'often' compared to 5% of females).

Comparing the young people's experience of sex talk with their mothers (Table 6.3) or their fathers (Table 6.4), both genders reported having communicated more with their mothers (though this difference is less for males). This confirms the findings of Table 5.2 in chapter 5, in which both young men and women ranked mothers higher as a source of information than fathers. The results are also similar to those from the focus groups and other studies discussed earlier.

Table 6.4 Extent and Content of Verbal Sexual Communication with Father and Derived Measure

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
Frequency of sex talk with father							
Never	42.1	43.6	42.5	74.7	76.3	75.2	63.1
Rarely	26.6	21.4	25.1	10.8	4.0	8.8	14.9
Sometimes	16.2	15.4	16.0	6.2	3.0	5.2	9.2
Often	5.8	6.0	5.8	1.3	1.5	1.4	3.0
Does not apply	9.4	13.7	10.6	7.0	15.2 ^{▼▼▼}	9.4 ^{***}	9.9
N = 100%	278	117	395	471	198	669	1064*
Number of sex-related topics talked about with father							
0 topics	36.7	36.8	36.7	53.5	56.6	54.4	47.9
1 – 2 topics	25.8	21.4	24.5	27.2	24.2	26.3	25.6
3 – 10 topics	27.6	29.1	28.1	10.2	4.0	8.4	15.7
Does not apply	9.8	12.8	10.7	9.1	15.2 ^{▼▼}	10.9 ^{***}	10.8
N = 100%	275	117	392	471	198	669	1061*
Sex-related topics talked about with father							
'Namoro' (Dating)	42.6	41.9	42.4	33.1	23.2 [▼]	30.2 ^{***}	34.7
Condoms	30.6	34.2	31.6	6.4	2.5	5.2 ^{***}	15.0
Pregnancy	16.7	19.7	17.6	12.7	10.6	12.1 [*]	14.1
STIs and HIV/AIDS	21.1	20.5	20.9	7.0	5.1	6.4 ^{***}	11.8
When to start having sex	20.0	15.4	18.6	3.6	1.0	2.8 ^{***}	8.7
Masturbation	13.1	18.0	14.5	1.3	1.0	1.2 ^{***}	6.1
Sexual intercourse (sexual act)	12.0	13.7	12.5	1.7	1.0	1.5 ^{***}	5.6
Father's own sexual experiences	8.4	15.4 [▼]	10.5	2.6	2.5	2.5 ^{***}	5.5
Sexual development	6.2	9.4	7.1	4.5	2.5	3.9 [*]	5.1
Contraceptive methods	5.1	7.7	5.9	3.6	2.0	3.1 [*]	4.2
Does not apply	9.8	12.8	10.7	9.1	15.2	10.9	10.8
N = 100%	275	117	392	471	198	669	1061*
◆Extent of sex talk with father							
'Never'	28.3	27.6	28.1	50.9	53.8	51.7	43.0
'Sometimes'	28.3	22.4	26.6	28.9	22.8	27.1	26.9
'Often'	30.9	31.0	30.9	10.5	5.1	8.9	17.0
Does not apply	12.5	19.0	14.4	9.8	18.3 ^{▼▼}	12.3 ^{***}	13.1
N = 100%	272	116	388	468	197	665	1053*

*p < 0.05 ***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
 ▼p < 0.05 ▼▼p < 0.01 ▼▼▼p < 0.001 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for each gender)
 *There were 6 male and 7 female missing cases from the question about the frequency of sex talk with father, and 9 male and 7 female missing cases from the two items about sexual topics talked about with father and 13 male and 11 female missing case from the measure of extent of sex talk with father.
 ◆This measure was developed by adding the answers to the questions about frequency of sex communication with father (scored as: never=1, rarely=2, sometimes=3, often=4) and number of sex related topics talked about with father (scored as: 0 topics=0, 1-2 topics=1, 3-10 topics=2). Chi-square test and principal component analysis also showed these two variables to be highly related. Those participants that had scored 1 in the addition of two questions were classified as "never", 2 to 3 as "sometimes" and 4 to 6 as "often".

6.1.3 Taboo Topics and Openness

In order to access which sex-related topics are 'taboo', the young people were asked to indicate which topics they thought they could *never* talk about with their parents. This question was asked because, even though most young people have not talked about a variety of sex-related topics with their parents (as shown in Tables 6.3 and 6.4), this does not necessarily mean that they *would not* do so in the future. Hence asking young people specifically about what they believe they could never talk about provides a more accurate indication of the topics that are taboo and consequently the *openness* that exists for them to talk about certain topics with their parents.

In Table 6.5, the sex-related topics that young people indicated they could never talk about with their mothers are presented in rank order, as well as the proportion of young people that indicated a particular number of topics they could never talk about. The top three taboo topics that the young people stated are *mother's own sexual experiences*, *when to start having sex* and *masturbation*. Interestingly, even for these 3 topics, only a minority of young people stated they could never talk about them with their mothers. This means that though most young people have never talked to their mothers about her own sexual experiences for example (see Table 6.3), only about a third feel they could never do so in the future. Significantly more males than females reported they could never talk about *masturbation* with their mothers (39% compared to 29%) and *sexual development* (18% compared to 5%).

Table 6.5 Sex-related Topics That Could Never Be Talked About With Mother

Sex-related topics that could never be talked about with mother	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-24
Mother's own sexual experiences	30.2	34.5	31.5	37.5	33.8	36.4	34.6
When to start having sex	33.5	31.9	33.0	35.1	32.7	34.4	33.9
Masturbation	41.1	33.6	38.9	29.6	28.6	29.3***	32.8
Sexual intercourse (sexual act)	21.8	19.8	21.2	25.1	23.6	24.6	23.4
Sexual development	17.8	19.0	18.2	4.1	6.0	4.7***	9.7
Condoms	7.6	6.9	7.4	6.4	4.0	5.7	6.3
Contraceptive methods	5.1	7.8	5.9	6.2	5.5	6.0	6.0
Pregnancy	6.2	5.2	5.9	5.6	6.0	5.7	5.8
STIs and HIV/AIDS	5.8	3.5	5.1	5.1	4.5	5.0	5.0
'Namoro' – Dating	4.0	7.8	5.1	2.6	4.0	3.0	3.8
Does not apply	10.6	7.8	9.7	3.4	8.6♥	5.0**	6.7
N =100%	275	116	391	466	198	664	1055*
Number of sex-related topics that could never be talked about with mother							
0 topics	22.6	25.9	23.5	33.7	31.3	33.0	29.5
1 – 2 topics	41.1	42.2	41.4	38.0	38.9	38.3	39.4
3 – 10 topics	25.8	24.1	25.3	24.9	21.2	23.8	24.4
Does not apply	10.6	7.8	9.7	3.4	8.6♥	5.0**	6.7
N =100%	275	116	391	466	198	664	1055*

p < 0.01 *p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
♥p < 0.05 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for females)
*There were 10 male and 12 female missing cases from the items about sexual topics and those that could never be talked about with mother.

At the bottom of Table 6.5, the distribution of young people who indicated 0, 1-2, or 3-10 topics they could never talk about with their mothers is shown. The young women were significantly more likely than the men not to have reported any topics that they thought they could never talk about with their mothers – 33% reported 0 topics compared to 24% of males. This is as expected and is similar to the previous findings (Table 6.3) showing that young women talk about sex more than men with their mothers and consequently have less ‘taboo’ topics.

In the case of never talking about specific sex-related topics with fathers, Table 6.6 shows that for all the 10 topics investigated, the females reported significantly more than the males that they would never do so. Similarly, at the bottom of the Table it can be seen that the young women indicated more topics that they could never talk about with their fathers than the men did – for example, 18% of females stated 6-10 topics compared to 4% of males.

Table 6.6 Sex-related Topics That Could Never Be Talked About With Father

Sex-related topics that could never be talked about with father	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-24
Father's own sexual experiences	26.5	25.9	26.3	49.5	39.7	46.5***	39.0
When to start having sex	19.7	14.7	18.2	47.4	40.7	45.5***	35.3
Masturbation	23.8	19.0	22.3	37.7	33.9	36.6***	31.3
Sexual intercourse (sexual act)	16.4	6.0♥♥	13.3	37.9	32.3	36.3***	27.7
Sexual development	11.9	12.1	12.0	29.2	21.2	26.9***	21.3
Pregnancy	7.8	6.0	7.3	19.3	17.5	18.7***	14.5
Contraceptive methods	4.5	7.8	5.5	19.7	16.4	18.8***	13.8
Condoms	4.8	3.5	4.4	19.1	13.8	17.5***	12.6
STIs and HIV/AIDS	6.0	5.2	5.7	13.4	11.6	12.9***	10.2
'Namoro' – Dating	2.2	6.0♥	3.4	11.0	9.0	10.5***	7.8
Does not apply	16.4	19.8	17.5	17.1	24.3	19.2	18.6
N =100%	268	116	384	461	189	650	1034*
Number of sex-related topics that could never be talked about with father							
0 topics	34.0	37.9	35.2	18.2	14.8	17.2	23.9
1 – 2 topics	32.1	29.3	31.3	22.3	25.4	23.2	26.2
3 – 5 topics	13.1	8.6	11.7	23.2	20.1	22.3	18.4
6 – 10 topics	4.5	4.3	4.4	19.1	15.3	18.0	13.0
Does not apply	16.4	19.8	17.5	17.1	24.3	19.2***	18.6
N = 100%	268	116	384	461	189	650	1034*

***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
♥p < 0.05 ♥♥p < 0.01 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for males)
*There were 17 male and 26 female missing cases from the items about sexual topics that could never talk about with father.

For both genders, the most 'taboo' topic is *father's own sexual experiences* (26% for males and 47% for females) and the least is *dating* (3% for males and 11% for females). Generally young people find it most difficult talking to both their mothers and fathers about their parents' own sexual experiences.

Comparing 'taboo' topics with mothers and fathers (Table 6.5 and 6.6), the proportion of males that reported that certain topics could never be talked about was generally higher for mothers than fathers, whilst for females the reverse was true. Thus in terms of young men, though they generally talk more about sex with their mothers, they have less 'taboo' topics with their fathers. Perhaps this is because when fathers do engage in sex talk with their sons, they do so more 'liberally' than mothers. Generally, young men feel more comfortable talking about sex with the same gender parent, as do the young women, thus supporting other studies (e.g. Fisher, 1990; Miller *et al.* 1998) and the focus groups results.

6.1.4 Reasons for Lack of Verbal Sexual Communication

As the focus groups and survey results have shown that the extent of verbal sexual communication between young people and parents is generally low, it is important to examine *why*. A list of the reasons stated in the focus groups is presented in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7 Reasons Why Young People and Parents Do Not Talk About Sex, as Stated in the Focus Groups

REASONS FOR NOT TALKING ABOUT SEX	STATED BY:	
	YOUNG PEOPLE	PARENTS
Parents do not talk	✓	✓
Young people do not talk	✓	✓
Feeling embarrassed and uncomfortable	✓	✓
Lack of parental knowledge and young people knowing more than parents	✓	✓
Young people learn about sex elsewhere	✓	✓
Schools should teach about sex	✓	✓
Parents' upbringing: their own parents never talked or they came from rural areas	✓	✓
Fear of parental reaction*	✓	
Cannot ask whatever one wants	✓	
Parents judge the purpose of the talk	✓	
Parents think that young people are too innocent	✓	
Parents think it is better to hide	✓	
Too young: age of young person		✓
Fear of encouraging sex		✓

* Examples of parental reaction that young people fear includes parents scolding them or telling them not to have sex.

An additional reason which was not explicitly stated in the focus groups – thus not included in Table 6.7 - but which was implied in the parents' discourse, is the lack of clear parental sexual values. In essence, because some parents are not sure about what they should believe, they do not know what to say to their children and so avoid talking about sex with them. Some of the mothers explained that because young people's sexual behaviour has changed so much since they themselves were young (has become more "liberal"), they believe they should learn to accept the changes, even though they find this difficult. So instead of explaining their feelings to their children, they prefer to ignore talking about sex. 'Poorly defined' sexual values has also been shown by other research to be one of the reasons why parents do not talk to their children about sex (e.g. Fitzgerald & Fitzgerald, 1987).

Despite the stated reasons for a lack of verbal sexual communication, it became clear that young people wish they could talk more about sex with their parents. In fact, some reported that it is their parents' "responsibility" to initiate sex talk, even if they are already knowledgeable:

PF: And with whom would you like to talk?

Many: With parents...

B1: Parents have to take initiative, you know. Because if a person has to take initiative, he ends up being scared, I don't know. Because if parents came to you, we trust parents right. [Parents should say]: "Come here, let's talk about sex". So it becomes more liberal, right. There isn't that fear. They could even want to know about your life, really talk to you. What is bad is when you think that your father does not want to talk to you really. What his reaction will be if you go to him to talk about sex, right. There is a difference [between] the father approach you and you approach the father.

(Young men, group 1)

B5: Knowing or not knowing [about sex], I think that it is parents' duty to inform or at least talk, right, help, even if the young person already knows everything, everything, everything...even if he is sexually experienced, but...all aspects, but there exists the psychological need of the father to talk with their child really, talk and initiate the topic [sex]. Even just to do the role of parent, right, who is there informing the son, talking...

(Young men, group 2)

The parents' feelings about desiring more sex talk with their children was more varied than the young people. Many of the fathers and mothers mentioned that they believe it is important to talk about sex with young people and that they should talk more. However, it became apparent that the parents who believed this, were generally the ones who talked more to their children about sex anyway. The parents who do not talk, or have more difficulties in doing so, said they did not like to talk about this and preferred to avoid any communication about sex. The contrasting parental attitudes and difficulties they face are clearly demonstrated in the following extract:

M1: ...Sometimes I will release [information] a little, we talk, we talk about this thing of AIDS, this thing, but they [girls] are really quiet, and so, I don't like to talk a lot about sex, no.

M4: I think that we must talk more, I talk at home more with my son.

M6: I think that the mothers of boys have to say to use condoms, not to get the girls pregnant, not get diseases...

M4 interrupts: Fine, fine, but sometimes only say: "Look, you have to use because of this and this", you are encouraging them to do [have sex]. I teach a lot: "Look, it is dangerous, there are the diseases, the early pregnancy". So, what I try to inform is that they shouldn't try to form a family early because they are not going to have the professional skills, not going to have the maturity either...

M6: At home, thank God, we talk about everything...at anytime. My youngest son completed 11 years now, when we want to talk about something we take advantage of the opportunity, we have to teach. But there is a different language for each age. I think that it is necessary, and we are always talking...

M5: It is better that I teach things to her than she finding out in the streets.

PF: But the majority of parents do not talk. What do you think about this?

M4: I think it is a mistake...

M3: I myself am not much into talking about this part [sex].

PF: No? Why?

M3: It is because I'm embarrassed (laughter), I say, like, a few things, but not everything.

(Mothers, group 1)

In general, there are many reasons why young people and parents experience difficulties in talking about sex. However, parental attitudes towards verbal sexual communication vary more than the young people. Several parents said they do not want to talk more, whilst most of the young people wish they could.

6.2 Parental Sexual Attitudes

What do parents think of young people having sex? In the previous chapter, some aspects of parental sexual attitudes were presented. For example, it was shown that parents generally view young people's couple relationships today as being "too liberal, too fast and with no commitment". In terms of young people having sex, when the fathers and mothers in the focus groups were asked to talk about this, it became clear that most are against it occurring because of sexual risks, in particular pregnancy. The majority of the parents argued that young people should postpone having sex until they are older, know how to protect themselves and are able to support a child if a pregnancy occurs. Some of the parents did argue that sex should only take place after marriage, but the general consensus is that parents do not think young people are ready to face the responsibilities and consequences that having sex involves.

Despite this general view of young people having sex, it is clear that both fathers and mothers are more against young women having sex than men, mainly because they are the ones who get pregnant. The parents admitted awareness of this bias, but believe that this is the reality young people face:

M4: Yes, women, I think that women have a more weak position, I think, that each of them should protect themselves more, because the boys today go there, have sex and all, get her pregnant, he doesn't take responsibility for it, and so she is the one left with that consequence, or her mother, which is what most happens. [The mothers of the girl] receives it [the child] and has to take care. So the woman has to protect herself more...

PF: And the man?

M4: Because usually the men don't want to take responsibility [for the pregnancy], they really don't, it is hard for you to find two or three [men] who want to be responsible. So when it is like this, the woman should be more careful to protect herself because the man doesn't care, he doesn't care.

M6: Though it should be the same...

M4: Yes, it should be the same, but it isn't...

(Mothers, group 1)

The mothers, more than the fathers, talked about the importance of parents teaching young men to be responsible for their sexual behaviour. Nevertheless, both parents' attitudes are more 'liberal' towards young men. This bias was also clearly communicated by the young people in the focus groups:

B4:...Nowadays, parents try to keep their daughters more for themselves.

PF: And not the sons?

B1: You know how it goes, right? The father that has a male child, thinks that his son is the best, will have sex with one woman and then later is already with another. Now, the father that has a daughter, he wants to hide her more. I don't know, it seems that he wants to preserve more the daughter. He thinks his daughter is not ready for this [sex]. So, I think that there is a difference between parents that have sons from parents that have daughters. So there is a big difference in this. The father is more liberal with the son, he can do whatever he was. The father thinks his son can do anything and everything.

(Young men, group 1)

The young women also stated that parents in general want their daughters to marry as virgins but are not concerned if their sons do not. Similar results are shown by the survey. The respondents were asked to state what they thought each of their parents' attitudes are young people having sex and the findings are presented in Table 6.8. Significant differences between young men and women are shown throughout the Table. In essence, both mothers and fathers were reported to have more 'liberal' attitudes by the males than by the females. For example, in the case of mothers, 23% of males compared to 52% of females reported that young people having sex "is not right at all". That is, having sex is essentially considered by mothers to be 'less right' for young women than for men. Similar findings are shown for the fathers' attitudes. For example, 22% of males reported that their fathers think that young people having sex is *absolutely fine* compared to 7% of females. The fathers' attitudes towards young men having sex are even more 'liberal' than the mothers as a higher proportion of males reported that their fathers think young people having sex is *absolutely fine* as opposed to their mothers (22% compared to 11%).

Table 6.8 Parental Sexual Attitudes and Derived Measures

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
Mother's attitude of young people having sex							
It is not right at all	26.2	16.4	23.3	53.1	49.5	52.0	41.4
It is ok, as long as they are responsible	52.7	62.9	55.7	39.1	36.7	38.4	44.8
Absolutely fine	10.8	11.2	10.9	4.7	6.1	5.1	7.2
Does not apply	10.4	9.5	10.1	3.2	7.7	4.5***	6.6
N = 100%	279	116	395	473	196	669	1064*
Father's attitude of young people having sex							
It is not right at all	16.9	11.2	15.2	54.7	51.8	53.9	39.5
It is ok, as long as they are responsible	41.0	49.1	43.4	21.7	15.2	19.8	28.6
Absolutely fine	23.0	19.8	22.1	7.7	3.6	6.5	12.3
Does not apply	19.1	19.8	19.3	15.9	29.4***	19.9***	19.7
N = 100%	278	116	394	466	197	663	1057*
◆Mother's sexual attitude							
'Conservative'	26.2	16.4	23.3	53.1	49.5	52.0	41.4
'Liberal'	63.4	74.1	66.6	43.8	42.9	43.5	52.1
Does not apply	10.4	9.5	10.1	3.2	7.7	4.5***	6.6
N = 100%	279	116	395	473	196	669	1064
◆Father's sexual attitude							
'Conservative'	16.9	11.2	15.2	54.7	51.8	53.9	39.5
'Liberal'	64.0	69.0	65.5	29.4	18.8	26.2	40.9
Does not apply	19.1	19.8	19.3	15.9	29.4***	19.9***	19.7
N = 100%	278	116	394	466	197	663	1057

***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
*p < 0.05 ***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for females)
*There were 6 male and 7 female missing cases from mother's attitude of young people having sex, 7 male and 13 female missing cases from father's attitude, and 8 male and 17 female missing cases from parental sexual attitudes.
◆These two derived measures were developed from the items about mother's and father's attitude of young people having sex. Those participants who answered that their parents think that young people having sex is *not right at all* were classified as 'conservative' – the two other options were classified as 'liberal'.

The two bottom items in Table 6.8 are derived summary measures of the mothers' and fathers' sexual attitudes that were developed to be used in the logistic regression analysis (see bottom of Table for more details). The same pattern as discussed before is observed – i.e. that the parents of the young men were reported as significantly more *'liberal'* than those of the women. In general, Table 6.19 provides further evidence that parents view sexual behaviour differently for young men and women.

Therefore, despite parents being generally concerned and against young people having unprotected sex, both the focus groups and survey results show that they are sending mixed-messages to young people. Hence their own biases serve to perpetuate the gender inequality that exists, including the 'irresponsibility' of males.

6.2.1 Parental Sexual Attitudes Communicated Through Verbal Sexual Communication

When the participants in both the focus groups and in-depth interviews were asked about what their parents thought of young people having sex, it became clear that their perception was closely linked to what their parents *explicitly said*. That is, it is mainly through verbal sexual communication that young people know what their parents believe. In fact, several of the young people who said they did not talk to their parents about sex, could not describe their parents' sexual attitudes, as was the case of F#11, one of the females interviewed:

I: What does your father think of young people having sex?

F#11: My father, I can't say much [about what he thinks] because I don't see him much and so we don't talk about this. I don't know what he thinks.

I: What about your step-father?

F#11: He also does not say anything. He just keeps quiet.

(F#11, female age 16, virgin)

Even though young people who did not talk to their parents about sex were often unsure about their parents' sexual attitudes, it is important to mention that in some cases, parental *silence*, or no verbal sexual communication, was interpreted by young people as a more 'liberal' sexual attitude:

I: What do your parents think of young people having sex before marriage?

F#4: They don't think and don't say anything. My married sisters didn't marry as virgins, so I don't think they have anything against it.

(F#4, female age 18, virgin)

In the case of F#4, her perception of her mother's sexual attitude towards marriage was right, as confirmed by her mother:

I: What do you think of young people having sex before marriage?

Mother F#4: To me...it doesn't matter. I think that having sex before marriage is even better, you want to know why? Because they already know what is good and what is bad. If they do it [have sex] with love...then it [the relationship] goes ahead. But if they do it without love, without affection, then it [the relationship] ends there. So they learn what they want. I'm not against it.

(Mother of M#4)

However, other cases showed that silence from parents does not mean acceptance, even though young people may interpret it in this manner. For example, F#14, a 16 year old girl who got pregnant when she was 15, explained that she did not think her step-father was upset when she got pregnant because he *did not say anything* to her. However, according to her mother, her step-father was very upset and angry and even stopped talking to her mother for a week. The fact that F#14's step-father did not express his disapproval towards her pregnancy in essence played a role in minimising her perception of the seriousness of the situation. After she had her son, F#14 continued to have unprotected sex.

In general, these results support *hypothesis 1.2* (see chapter 3) which stated that through verbal sexual communication, young people form their perceptions of their parents' sexual attitudes. In fact, the findings show that for parental attitudes to be communicated adequately to young people, they need to be expressed verbally. If they are not, young people will either not know, be unsure, or form an incorrect impression of what their parents believe. As will be seen later in this chapter, parental control and non-verbal reactions to sexual scenes on TV also communicates parental attitudes, but it appears that it is only through verbal sexual communication that this is made clear to young people.

6.3 Quality of Relationship between Young People and Parents

When the parents in the focus groups were asked to talk about their relationships with their sons and daughters, they first discussed how different their relationships are today, compared to the ones they had with their own parents:

F3: ...I try to bring them up the same way my father did, I try to bring him up the same way. But young people nowadays are very complicated, understand? I think they want to be the owner of the world really quickly, at 13 they already want to own the world, I don't think that that is the way...I was brought up in a very strict environment with my dad and when he was spanking me, I was just hit, he would talk, and everything he said I tried to obey. Nowadays I see many parents talk to their children and it is the same thing as entering one ear and leaving by the other. They don't care anymore for the things we try to pass on to them.

F1: Because us, in my time, it was very different. There wasn't this thing of...I try to be hard with my children. I am hard, but there are times that they tell me off, there is this freedom that I didn't have. Like, to come and complain about something, and if I say two, three times, they want to complain. It is very different.

(Fathers, group 1)

In general, the parents said that young people today are less respectful as they are more likely to talk back to their parents, complain, curse, ignore them when they are being talked to and generally do not accept parental discipline. The parents believe that young people are being influenced to behave negatively towards their parents by the media and their peers.

Nevertheless, it was also argued that parents today are respecting their children less as well. According to the mothers, parents in the past would never argue or use physical violence in front of their children as they do today. Even if they were having a difficult relationship between themselves, parents tried to keep their problems away from their children. In addition, couples were generally united and thus children grew up in more stable homes. However, in terms of physical violence towards children, this seems to have reduced in comparison to the past (though some mothers did mention that they spanked their children).

When the young people were asked to discuss their relationships with their parents, they described their parents as being: old fashioned; not paying enough attention to them; not talking to them and being too controlling. The issue of "respect" was also mentioned:

PF: Talk more about the relationship between parents and young people...

G9: Parents don't always respect the positions of their children.

G8: But children are forced to respect those of parents.

G3: They say that they are always right. You are not allowed to give your opinion.

G9: They tell you that story: "I'm doing this for your own good"...

(Young women, group 1)

Therefore, both the parents and young people complained about their relationships in similar ways. The ‘conflict’ in their relationships may be influenced by the lack of time young people spend with their parents:

G9: Nowadays the majority [of parents] has to stay...taking care of obligations to support the family [work outside of the home].
G3: The way is [for young people] to stay alone at home. My siblings used to.
G5: My mother, like, she works the whole day, when she gets back at night, like, she gets back, and then we get back from school, she is already at home, and then we almost don't talk, like, only when she asks and then I reply, like... And then I keep saying like this: "Mum, why don't you talk to me?" [Mother replies]: "There is nothing to talk about".
G2: I have a friend that she spent practically all her childhood without talking to her parents. Both used to work and then in the morning she used to go to school, when they got back, she was already asleep. Then they only saw each other at weekends – and when she saw them! And so she practically grew up without much support, neither from the father or the mother.
(Young women, group 1)

According to the survey participants and shown in Table 6.9, when young people do spend time with their parents, they are more likely to do so with their mothers. The majority of both the young men (67%) and women (70%) surveyed reported spending more time with their mothers than with their fathers, followed by an equal amount of time with both parents (24% of males and 20% of females). Only a small minority spent more time with their fathers (7% of males and 6% of females). A significant difference is shown between the older females (18-24) compared to the younger ones (13-17), in which a greater proportion of the older females stated that the question *did not apply* to them. This difference is probably because the older females are more likely than the younger ones to be either cohabiting or married, and thus living away from their parents and consequently not spending much time with either of them.

Table 6.9 Which Parent do Young People Spend More Time With?

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
Which parent do you spend most time with?							
Mother	68.4	62.1	66.6	70.0	68.2	69.5	68.4
Father	7.1	7.8	7.3	7.0	4.0	6.1	6.6
Both the same	22.7	26.7	23.9	20.3	20.2	20.3	21.6
Does not apply	1.8	3.5	2.3	2.8	7.6▼	4.2	3.5
N = 100%	282	116	398	473	198	671	1069*

▼p < 0.05 (for significant difference between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for females)
*There were 3 male and 5 female missing cases from this question.

It was suggested in the focus groups that young people are not having much contact with their parents and even less so with fathers (though there were examples that this is not always the case). Also gender differences in the parent-youth relationship include the fact that young people are also more likely to talk to their mothers than they are to their fathers:

FP: With whom do they talk to most? Is it with the father or with the mother?

F1: At home they talk more with the mother...it is always more with the mother. It is more liberal with mother, right.

F3: I think that as much as a father is a friend of his children, because a father, as well as being a father should be a friend as well, but I think that as much as he is a friend of his child, the child opens up more with the mother. Because when I was a child, even when I was a grown boy really, my father used to like to play around with me a lot, but anything, even when I got a girlfriend, I would tell my mother first. And so I think that a child, in this case, hasn't changed a lot [compared to the past]. I think that if he has to open up about something, I think he will tell the mother first.

(Fathers, group 2)

The result of the time that young people spend with each parent, coupled with the communication that they have with each, is that young people feel closer to their mothers than they do to their fathers. In fact, according to both the mothers and the young women, mothers are generally the ones who are more responsible for the upbringing of young people:

PF: Who has more contact with young people?

M2: In my case there isn't the father, it is me, the father and the mother, I'm the one who listens, I'm the one who talks.

M3: I think that the majority of fathers are really absent really.

PF: What do you think Mrs. T?

M4: The one at my home [the father]... he says: "It is your responsibility".

M3: That is the way.

(Mothers, group 2)

In Table 6.10, information regarding the survey participants' perception of their relationship with their mothers as well as general communication is presented.

Table 6.10 General Relationship with Mother and Communication

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
In general, what is your relationship with your mother (or step-mother) like?							
Bad	2.1	1.7	2.0	2.6	1.5	2.2	2.2
Reasonable	6.4	4.3	5.8	9.8	12.5	10.6	8.8
Good	42.5	42.2	42.4	39.4	43.0	40.5	41.2
Excellent	48.2	49.1	48.5	47.9	41.0	45.8	46.8
Does not apply	0.7	2.6	1.3	0.4	2.0	0.9	1.0
N = 100%	280	116	396	470	200	670	1066*
How frequent do you talk to your mother (or step-mother) about things related to you?							
Never	5.7	11.2	7.3	5.5	7.0	6.0	6.5
Rarely	24.0	14.7	21.3	18.8	21.1	19.5	20.2
Sometimes	49.8	54.3	51.1	45.5	40.7	44.1	46.7
Often	15.8	15.5	15.7	28.3	28.1	28.3	23.6
Does not apply	4.7	4.3	4.6	1.9	3.0	2.2***	3.1
N = 100%	279	116	395	473	199	672	1067*
In the last seven days, did you talk to your mother (or step-mother) about things related to you?							
Yes	52.5	55.2	53.3	67.0	59.0	65.6	60.4
No	44.2	40.5	43.1	30.9	37.5	32.9	36.7
Does not apply	3.3	4.3	3.6	2.1	3.5	2.5***	2.9
N = 100%	276	116	392	469	200	669	1061*

***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)

*There were 5 male and 6 female missing cases from the question about relationship with mother, 6 male and 4 female missing cases from the question about frequency of talk with mother, and 9 male and 5 female missing cases from the question about talking to mother in the last seven days.

The majority of the young men and women stated that their relationship with their mothers was either *excellent* or *good* (49% and 42% of males respectively and 46% and 41% of females). In terms of talking to mothers about things related to them, the females reported significantly more than the males that this happened *often* (28% compared to 16%). This is supported by the last item in the Table, where more women than men experienced talking to their mothers about themselves in the last 7 days (66% compared to 53%). Thus in general, though males and females perceive their relationship with their mothers to be similar, young women talk more to them about themselves than men do.

In the case of young people's relationship with their fathers, Table 6.11 shows that the young men were more likely to perceive their relationship as *excellent* and *good* than the young women (30% and 41% respectively for males and 22% and 38% for females). Though few young men communicate *often* with their fathers about themselves (6%), they significantly do so more than the females (for example, 35% of males stated *sometimes* compared to 22% of females). This is also supported by the last item in the Table, where a significantly greater amount of young men indicated that they had talked to their fathers about themselves in the last 7 days (30% compared to 20% of females).

Table 6.11 General Relationship with Father and Communication

Relationship with father	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
In general, what is your relationship with your father (or step-father) like?							
Bad	5.0	6.0	5.3	8.6	7.7	8.3	7.2
Reasonable	13.7	15.4	14.2	21.8	23.6	22.3	19.3
Good	42.8	35.9	40.8	37.4	38.5	37.7	38.9
Excellent	30.2	29.9	30.1	23.9	15.9	21.6	24.8
Does not apply	8.3	12.8	9.6	8.3	14.4♥	10.1***	9.9
N = 100%	278	117	395	468	195	663	1058*
How frequent do you talk to your father (or step-father) about things related to you?							
Never	19.8	24.8	21.3	35.6	36.4	35.8	30.4
Rarely	27.7	27.4	27.6	28.1	24.2	27.0	27.2
Sometimes	37.1	30.8	35.2	23.2	19.2	22.1	26.9
Often	6.1	6.8	6.3	4.3	4.0	4.2	5.0
Does not apply	9.4	10.3	9.6	8.7	16.2	10.9***	10.5
N = 100%	278	117	395	469	198	667	1062*
In the last seven days, did you talk to your father (or step-mother) about things related to you?							
Yes	29.0	32.5	30.1	20.9	17.7	19.9	23.7
No	60.2	54.7	58.6	70.4	67.7	69.6	65.5
Does not apply	10.8	12.8	11.4	8.7	14.7	10.5***	10.8
N = 100%	279	117	396	470	198	668	1064*

***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)

♥p < 0.05 (for significant difference between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for females)

*There were 6 male and 13 female missing cases from the question about relationship with father, 6 male and 9 female missing cases from the question about frequency of talk with father, and 5 male and 8 female missing cases from the question about talking to father in the last seven days.

In Table 6.12, the derived measures of *'quality of relationship with mother and father'* are shown. These measures were developed by adding the items in Tables 6.10 and 6.11 together (more detailed information is provided below 6.12). The items were added on the basis that they are believed to be theoretically related (i.e. the type of relationship that one perceives to have with a parent is generally related to the amount one talks to that parent) and because they were found by both chi-squared tests and principal component analysis to be highly associated to each other. The measures in the Table are two of the summary parental influence independent variables used in the logistic regression analysis presented in the following chapter.

Table 6.12 Derived Measures of Quality of Relationship with Parents

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
◆Quality of relationship with mother							
'Bad'	7.4	8.9	7.8	8.4	8.6	8.5	8.2
'Good'	54.4	51.3	53.5	47.3	53.8	49.2	50.8
'Excellent'	32.4	33.6	32.7	41.5	33.5	39.1	36.8
Does not apply	5.9	6.2	6.0	2.8	4.1	3.2*	4.2
N = 100%	272	113	385	463	197	660	1045*
◆Quality of relationship with father							
'Bad'	22.3	29.6	24.5	36.2	37.8	36.7	32.2
'Good'	49.5	35.7	45.4	43.8	37.3	41.9	43.2
'Excellent'	16.5	19.1	17.3	9.1	6.7	8.4	11.7
Does not apply	11.7	15.7	12.9	10.9	18.1♥	13.0***	13.0
N = 100%	273	115	388	461	193	654	1042*

*p < 0.05 ***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
♥p < 0.05 (for significant difference between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for females)
*There were 16 male and 16 female missing cases from the measure of quality of relationship with mother, 13 male and 22 female missing cases from the measure of quality of relationship with father, and 24 male and 34 female missing cases from the measure of quality of relationship with parents.
◆The derived measure of quality of relationship with mother was devised by adding the answers of the 3 items in Table 6.10. Similarly, the derived measure of quality of relationship with father was developed by adding the answers of the 3 items in Table 6.11. (The first item about general relationship with each parent was scored as follows: 1=bad, 2=reasonable, 3=good, 4=excellent; the second item about frequency of communication: 1=never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4=often; and the third item, yes=1 no=0). Those participants that had scored from 2 to 4 in the addition of the 3 items were classified as 'bad', 5 to 7 as 'good' and 8 to 9 as 'excellent'.

The combined data in Table 6.12 exhibit the same differences between young men and women shown in the previous two Tables. First, the females have a better *'quality of relationship with their mothers'* than the males (39% of

the females' relationship is '*excellent*' compared to 33% of males). However, in the case of fathers, young men have a significantly better relationship than the women do (17% of them compared to 8% of women have an '*excellent*' relationship with their father). Despite these differences, both the males and females '*quality of relationship*' is better with their mothers than with their fathers (higher proportion of both gender have an '*excellent*' relationship with their mothers than with their fathers).

In summary, both the focus groups and survey findings have shown that, as with other studies, most young people in this community are closer to their mothers than their fathers. They tend to spend more time with their mothers and talk to them more. However, the focus groups also revealed that there can be a great deal of conflict in their relationships and both the young people and parents wished it was different, especially with fathers, who are commonly '*absent*' in the lives of young people.

This information is particularly interesting given that the parents who participated in the focus groups are likely to be different from parents generally. Many parents were invited to participate in the focus groups but only a small minority showed interest and actually participated – and this was even more so for fathers. In general therefore, the parents that actually participated are likely to be parents who are more involved in young people's education and school activities, as well as more concerned with their general well-being than the other parents. This potential bias may imply that the actual relationships that exist between parents and young people are even more precarious than those described by the parents in the focus groups. However, the participation of young people in the focus groups was less biased than the parents, because the majority of young people that were invited were willing to participate (especially in the case of girls). It could thus be argued that their descriptions of the relationships with their parents are better indications of what actually occurs. Their discourses however, only confirm the problematic relationships between parents and young people in their community.

6.4 Non-Verbal Sexual Communication

In this section, background information of each of the factors of non-verbal sexual communication highlighted in chapter 3 is presented in turn.

6.4.1 Parental Control

According to the young people and parents in the focus groups, the experience of parental control varies across families. Some parents monitor their children's whereabouts, friendships, school performance carefully, whilst others do not:

F1: ...Others [parents] also are not bothered, their child goes out and they are not worried where he is. And there are lots of people like this...you know? Go somewhere [young person] and forget [parents]. Don't even ask where he is, where he went.

F4: In their school report, in the report is shown their number of absences, which many times is not enough because there are parents who don't worry about following, right...there are parents that don't have this, time, or worry of following their child's attendance at school...

(Fathers, group 2)

According to both the young people and parents in the focus groups, parental control is exercised in a variety of ways including: setting curfews; not allowing them to go out; getting to know who their friends are; wanting to know exactly where they are at all times; punishing them when they misbehave; setting age for dating; getting to know partner and encouraging them to date at home; and communicating values and reasons for parental control.

Gender differences in parental control exist. According to the young men, mothers are generally more involved in the day to day control than fathers. However, when rules are broken, fathers play a key role in disciplining. Differences in the extent of parental control also exist depending on whether the young person is male or female. Young women are usually more controlled than young men:

PF: Are the rules the same for boys and girls nowadays?

G9: No, the boys, gosh! They are more liberal [parents with boys]...

G1: One of these days my brother took his girlfriend to sleep at our home... [Participant then asked mother]: "Can I call my boyfriend to sleep cuddled up with me?" She [mother]: "You no, because no" and I don't say anything. With him [my mother] doesn't say anything.

G8: Men no, men is like this, if you ask if you can go out, [parents say] "Go and enjoy and do this, this and this". If woman is going out [parents say]: "no, no, no, the place of a woman is inside the home".

(Young women, group 2)

Other examples of parental control that are more likely to occur if the young person is female are: greater father involvement; parents are less likely to allow them to go out, day or night; someone they know and approve usually has to go along (such as a brother or another family relative) if they go out; parents want to know exactly where they are going and what time they will come home; parents want to meet their friends and are likely to talk to boyfriends about “what their intentions are” with their daughter. In essence, through controlling young women more than men, parents are further reinforcing different attitudes to young men and women's behaviour.

The parents in the focus groups stated that one of the main difficulties parents have with controlling their children, is the lack of time. Most of them go to work and thus often do not know where their son or daughter is. In fact, they mentioned that they wished the schools would help them to control their children better. Other difficulties that were mentioned are related to dealing with young people. In general, parents find it hard to control young people because they do not want to be controlled; they lack respect for their parents; often complain about any control and disobey parents.

Despite these difficulties, the parents suggested ways to improve parental control, including: better verbal communication – talk to them about the world around them, including sexuality, so that young people are more prepared to make decisions for themselves; set a curfew; know who their friends are and exactly where they go; have them spend more time at home with their friends instead of in “the streets”. In terms of dating, it was suggested that young people should be encouraged to invite their partners to date at home and also that parents should make an effort to get to know their partners. Lastly, the parents mentioned that there needs to be a balance in parental control, that is, to have rules, but to also give young people opportunities to make their own choices. This is important because parents are aware that if they control their children too much – such as preventing them from dating – this will not stop them and will only make them do it “behind their backs”. The young people themselves argued that too much parental control encourages them to do “wrong” things even more:

G3: Many times too, when parents control a lot, the girl ends up doing stupid things. That is why my mother says like this: “No, you are the one who knows when the time is right [to have sex]”.

G1: It is the same as the thing of dating. Because many times the parents are afraid and come to the children and say: “You are only going to date at 15”. And then the person thinks like this: “This must be a very good thing, I’m going soon [to date]”. And then they go and date with what, 12, 13 years of age.

G:7: I have a cousin who is 16, and then she couldn’t even go out of the house that they were saying: “Where is she going?”. They wanted to know everything. And then on purpose [she] went out with a guy, I think he was 15 years older than her, and then she had sex. Today she has a little girl of 4 months. It was on purpose. She said like this, that if they had not controlled her so much, if they had not held her back, she would have saved herself [kept her virginity]. But she did this just to annoy [her parents] really.

(Young women, group 1)

Thus in terms of the influence of too much control, both parents and the young people agree that it may have a negative effect on behaviour. It was also mentioned by the young men, that too much control is not good because when the young person becomes older and starts to go out into the world, he/she is not prepared due to lack of experience and will want to do everything that they could not do before.

The survey participants were asked three questions about parental control. They were asked to state how strict they consider each of their parents to be, as well as to indicate how often they are allowed to go out at night. The findings are shown in Table 6.13. The young men and women answered similarly to the questions regarding parental strictness. The majority of them stated that their mothers are *quite* strict (43% of males and 45% of females) as well as their fathers (37% of males and 32% of females). Fathers were generally reported as being stricter than mothers, as a greater proportion of both young men and women stated that their fathers are *very* strict compared to mothers (for example, 19% of females viewed their fathers as *very* strict compared to 12% in the case of mothers).

Table 6.13 Parental Strictness and Going Out At Night

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
Is your mother (or step-mother) strict?							
No	18.7	20.5	19.2	14.8	20.9	16.6	17.6
A little	25.9	19.7	24.1	25.1	21.9	24.2	24.1
Quite	40.7	47.9	42.8	45.9	42.9	45.0	44.2
Very	12.6	10.3	11.9	12.2	12.2	12.2	12.1
Does not apply	2.2	1.7	2.0	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.0
N = 100%	278	117	395	466	196	662	1057*
Is your father (or step-father) strict?							
No	17.2	17.2	17.2	16.5	16.4	16.5	16.8
A little	22.6	19.8	21.8	20.8	21.0	20.9	21.2
Quite	37.6	35.3	36.9	33.1	28.7	31.8	33.7
Very	12.0	15.5	13.1	19.3	19.0	19.2	16.9
Does not apply	10.6	12.1	11.0	10.3	14.9	11.6	11.4
N = 100%	274	116	390	466	195	661	1051*
Do your parents allow you to go out at night?							
Always	15.7	38.1	22.4	7.9	16.4	10.4	14.9
Usually	27.5	27.1	27.4	15.1	17.4	15.8	20.1
Sometimes	49.6	33.9	45.0	63.3	54.9	60.8	54.9
Never	7.1	0.9	5.3	13.8	10.3	12.8	10.0
Does not apply	0.0	0.0***	0.0	0.0	1.0***	0.3***	0.2
N = 100%	280	118	398	471	195	666	1064*

***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for each gender)
*There were 6 male and 14 female missing cases from the question about mother's strictness, 11 male and 15 female missing cases from question about father's strictness, 12 male and 21 female missing cases from strictness of parents, and 3 male and 10 female cases from the question about whether parents allow participants to go out at night.

In terms of being allowed out at night by parents, this differs significantly by gender and age. Males are more likely to be allowed out at night than females (for example, 22% of men compared to 10% of women stated that they are *a/ways* allowed out at night). For both genders, those in the older age group go out at night more frequently than the younger ones (for example, 38% of the 18-24 year old males go out *a/ways* compared to 16% of the 13-17 year olds). These findings indicate that parents are less controlling of older young people, and in particular if they are male. In general, these results confirm the gender-bias that was reported in the focus groups.

It was hypothesised in this study (*Hypothesis 4*, see chapter 3) that parental control would communicate parental sexual attitudes to young people non-verbally. That is, through parental control - for example, the way in which parents monitor and control their son or daughter dating - parental attitudes about relationships and sexuality are communicated. This hypothesis was supported in both the focus groups and in-depth interviews. For example, both the young men and women stated that due to the way their parents generally control males and females differently, they know that they hold different attitudes towards each gender having sex. Because parents usually control females more than males, young people believe that their parents are more conservative towards females having sex than males. Therefore, parental control is a non-verbal communicator of parental attitudes to young people. It is not as explicit or informative as when parents talk to young people about sex and verbally communicate their sexual attitudes, but it does send them a message.

6.4.2 Parental Non-verbal Feelings and Reactions to Sex-related Scenes on TV

Watching television (TV) is a significant part of current Brazilian culture. The majority of people in Brazil have and watch TV, irrespective of their social-economic status. This trend was observed in Samambaia Town, where it was noticed that most houses have television aerials. In addition, both the young people and parents in the focus groups mentioned watching TV and were aware of the different programmes showing at the time. A striking characteristic of the current TV programmes in Brazil, is that they are explicit in terms of sex-related contents, shown any time during the day. These vary from women in bikinis dancing erotically, to scenes in the soap-operas of couples engaging in passionate kisses, heaving petting and sexual intercourse. Partially or completely nude women are not uncommon, even in TV adverts. Because TV plays a prominent role in the lives of Brazilians, it is important to investigate how parents and young people react non-verbally to the sex-related scenes that are shown frequently. The manner in which parents react and consequently appear to feel, was hypothesised to be a way through which their sexual attitudes could be communicated non-verbally to young people (*Hypothesis 4*, see chapter 3).

This hypothesis was supported by the qualitative data, as communicated by one of the interviewees, F#10:

I: What does your biological father think of young people having sex?

F#10: He also thinks it's wrong. I mean, he doesn't say but we can see that he thinks it's wrong.

I: What do you mean? What do you "see" in him that makes you think he thinks it's wrong?

F#10: We can see that he think it's wrong to have sex before marriage. For him, sex before marriage is not so committed, it's not so serious, just for fun, for pleasure really, just to satisfy the moment.

I: Have you ever talked to him about this?

F#10: No, I don't talk to him about this.

I: So how do you know his opinion?

F#10: I can tell...sometimes when a scene of sex is shown on television, he leaves the room.

(F#10, female age 17, first sex at age 17)

In essence, because F#10's father would leave the room when a sex-related scene appeared on TV, she believed he thought young people having sex was wrong, even though she had never talked to him about his beliefs. Therefore, this and previous findings (i.e. about verbal sexual communication and parental control) supports the general hypothesis that parental sexual attitudes are communicated through both verbal and non-verbal sexual communication.

When asked about their non-verbal reactions to sex-related scenes on TV, many of the parents and young people in the focus groups stated that they continue to watch TV "normally", with no apparent response. Young men explained that because these scenes on TV are common, people are used to them and so do not show any reactions. This experience was mainly reported by the males. That is, they stated, more often than the females, that they and their parents do not react to sexual scenes on TV.

In many families however, there are a variety of non-verbal behaviours that both young people and parents engage in as a result of sex-related scenes on TV. It is common for parents to pretend that they are not watching the scene, to turn off the TV, change the channel, ask their children to leave the room or do something for them. Young people react in similar ways and their behaviour is clearly related to the presence and reactions of their parents:

B1: In my home no...In my home my mother goes and says like this: "Hey, lets all go to sleep" (laughter)...or changes the channel. But then sometimes she changes channel, but sometimes I say: "Ah, I'm going to bed!" and after when you see, I'm already there watching [again]. And then she comes there, and then when I see [her coming] from under the door I go and change the channel.

B6: When a scene like this is being shown, it means already changing the channel...(laughter)...Only in secret, really, can I watch...

PF: But... even during the soap-opera the channel is changed?

B6: Also. Because I have a younger sister, and so my mother doesn't like it.

(Young men, group 2)

G8: My mother generally, when these scenes begin, my mother [says]: "The stupid things are already going to start". And then my father looks like this, and then I go and leave. And then he starts to look like this at my mother, and then I notice that the thing here [scenes on TV] is already starting to get heavy, and then I go away.

G1: We prefer to leave [the room] than to stimulate their embarrassment. And so you stay like this, you look to the other side, go and listen to music...

(Young women, group 1)

Verbal expressions related to the sex-related scenes, from both parents and young people, often accompany their non-verbal behaviour. The comments are usually statements giving orders, such as "change the channel" and "lets go to bed", or with negative connotations, for example, "this is not the time to be showing such things".

Why do young people and parents react the way they do to the sex-related scenes on TV? The young women explained that they think their parents do not want them to watch sex-related scenes on TV because they think that they are too innocent and do not know anything. They also said that parents believe that by young people watching such scenes, they will have the desire and curiosity to go out and try it for themselves. That is, parents believe that sex-related scenes on TV encourage young people to have sex. However, they are more concerned about the scenes influencing females than they are males. One of the fathers said that he thinks his daughter changes the channel, leaves the room, or pretends not to be watching when a sexual scene is shown on TV, because she starts to feel sexual desire and gets embarrassed. He mentioned that he deliberately changes the channel or turns off the TV so that she will not get those feelings - which he acknowledges is a natural response, as he also has them sometimes.

Parental non-verbal reaction to sex-related scenes on TV was also examined in the survey. The young people were asked to state how comfortable

they perceive their parents to feel when they are watching sex-related scenes on TV and the results are shown in Table 6.14. First, most of the young people stated that their mothers feel *more or less* comfortable when watching a sex-related scene on TV (42% of males and 51% of females). Interestingly however, the young men reported more than the women that their mothers feel *very comfortable* (38% compared to 26%). Mothers therefore appear to be more comfortable in front of their sons than their daughters when watching sex-related scenes on TV. Similar results are shown for fathers' feelings towards sex-related scenes on TV. That is, males reported significantly more than the females that their fathers are *very comfortable* (49% compared to 21%) and most females stated that their fathers feel *more or less* comfortable (37% compared to 24% of males). This finding, as explained by the focus groups, is perhaps because parents are less worried about the scenes encouraging their sons to have sex than they are of their daughters, as it more accepted for males to be sexual.

Table 6.14 Parental non-verbal reaction to sex-related scenes on TV

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
How comfortable do you think your mother (or step-mother) feels when something related to sex is shown on TV?							
Very uncomfortable	14.0	14.7	14.2	16.6	26.9	19.6	17.6
More or less	43.5	37.1	41.6	53.4	45.2	51.0	47.5
Very comfortable	36.7	39.7	37.6	26.6	24.4	25.9	30.3
Does not apply	5.8	8.6	6.6	3.4	3.6 [▼]	3.5 ^{***}	4.6
N = 100%	278	116	394	470	197	667	1061*
How comfortable do you think your father (or step-father) feels when something related to sex is shown on TV?							
Very uncomfortable	10.0	11.2	10.3	25.3	27.5	25.9	20.1
More or less	25.3	21.6	24.2	37.9	32.6	36.4	31.8
Very comfortable	48.8	48.3	48.6	22.1	19.2	21.2	31.5
Does not apply	16.0	19.0	16.9	14.8	20.7	16.5 ^{***}	16.7
N = 100%	281	116	397	467	193	660	1057*

***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
▼p < 0.05 (for significant difference between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for females)
*There were 7 male and 9 female missing cases from the question about mother's feelings to sex on TV and 4 male and 16 female missing cases from the question about father's feelings to sex on TV.

In summary, the focus groups and survey show that non-verbal reactions to sex-related scenes on TV varies and is related to gender. Parents are more likely to react and appear less comfortable in front of young women than they are of men. Their non-verbal behaviour essentially communicates that females need to be 'protected' from sex more than males, thus further encouraging the gender inequality.

6.4.3 Quality of Relationship between Parents

Quality of relationship between parents was conceptualised as a non-verbal sexual communication factor because as young people observe their parents' relationship, they learn about how couples relate to one another non-verbally and are likely to model this behaviour (as explained by the Social Learning Theory). The survey respondents were asked to rate their parents' relationship and to state how often they quarrel.

As shown in Table 6.15, the males and females gave similar answers about their parents' relationship. The majority of them reported that their parents have a *good* relationship (47% of males and 41% of females) and only a small proportion said their relationship was *bad* (5% of males and 8% of females). In terms of parents quarrelling, most said they do so *sometimes* (38% of males and 41% of females), followed by *rarely* (27% compared to 22%). The derived measure of '*quality of relationship between parents*' shown at the bottom of Table 6.15 was developed to be one of the parental influence independent variables used in the logistic regression analysis presented in the next chapter. This measure was devised by combining the two other items in the Table (see bottom of Table 6.15 for more details) because it is believed that they are related theoretically (i.e. those parents who have a *bad* relationship are more likely to quarrel *often* than those who have an *excellent* relationship) and statistically (the items were found to be significantly related by a chi-square test and principal component analysis). The findings related to this measure are that for both genders, most of their parents have a '*good*' quality of relationship (49% for males and 44% for females) but some rated it as '*bad*' (20% for males and 27% for females). Only a minority of their parents have an '*excellent*' relationship (18% of males and 16% of females).

Table 6.15 Relationship between Parents and Derived Measure

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
In general, what is your parents' relationship like?							
Bad	4.7	6.9	5.3	7.7	9.1	8.2	7.1
Reasonable	16.1	19.0	17.0	20.2	20.8	20.4	19.1
Good	50.2	38.8	46.8	42.2	39.1	41.2	43.3
Excellent	20.8	23.3	21.5	21.5	16.2	19.9	20.5
Does not apply	8.2	12.1	9.4	8.4	14.7	10.3	9.9
N = 100%	279	116	395	465	197	662	1057*
Do your parents quarrel?							
Often	8.6	13.8	10.1	14.0	13.9	14.0	12.5
Sometimes	40.9	31.0	38.0	41.1	40.7	41.0	39.9
Rarely	25.8	31.0	27.3	23.0	20.6	22.3	24.2
Never	14.0	8.6	12.4	9.7	7.2	9.0	10.3
Does not apply	10.8	15.5	12.2	12.3	17.5	13.8	13.2
N = 100%	279	116	395	465	194	659	1054*
◆Quality of relationship between parents							
'Bad'	18.7	23.3	20.1	24.8	31.1	26.7	24.2
'Good'	52.5	40.5	49.0	45.3	39.4	43.6	45.6
'Excellent'	18.0	19.0	18.3	17.2	11.4	15.5	16.5
Does not apply	10.8	17.2	12.7	12.6	18.1♥	14.3	13.7
N = 100%	278	116	394	459	193	652	1046*

♥p < 0.05 (for significant difference between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for females)
*There were 6 male and 14 female missing cases from the question about relationship between parents, 6 male and 17 female missing cases from the question about parental quarrelling and 7 male and 24 female missing cases from the measure of quality of relationship between parents.
◆The derived measure of quality of relationship between parents was developed by adding the answers of the 2 other items in the table. (The first item about general relationship between parents was scored as follows: 1=bad, 2=reasonable, 3=good, 4=excellent; the second item about parental quarrelling was: 1=often, 2=sometimes, 3=rarely, 4=never) Those participants that had scored from 2 to 4 in the addition of the 2 items were classified as "bad", 5 to 6 as "good" and 7 to 8 as "excellent".

6.4.4 Physical Affection

Physical affection between parents and young people and between parents was investigated in this study and conceptualised as a non-verbal sexual communication factor (see chapter 3, Hypothesis 7). From the focus groups, it became apparent that physical affection between parents and young people varies from family to family. However in general, most of the mothers reported that they are affectionate towards their children, whilst in the case of fathers, some are and others not. Reasons for mothers and fathers not demonstrating

affection included: lack of time, not having received affection from their own parents, and young people not being affectionate towards them. In terms of gender differences, the young men mentioned that they are more affectionate with their mothers than with their fathers and that females generally receive more affection from both parents. The experiences of the young women was more mixed - some have fathers that are more affectionate than their mothers and vice versa.

The extent of physical affection that occurs between parents and young people seems to be related to age. In essence, the older children become, the less affection takes place as one of the mothers explained:

M4: ...We [participant and her husband] are very affectionate with them [two sons]. Every morning we give them a kiss and a hug, when they get up, when they go to sleep, during the day, I always [do this]. [But] There exists this barrier when a girl or a boy are in their youth, they distance themselves a bit. They don't want to walk around holding their mother anymore. There is a phase when they are close and it was marvellous, on the street it was that closeness, we hugged each other. But then a moment arrives when he doesn't want, one of these days he [her son] even said: "Go woman, don't keep holding me, no, because they are going to think that you are my girlfriend".
(Mother, group 1)

Young people's attitudes towards affection from parents varied as shown by the females' discourse:

PF: And do you like to receive affection from your parents? How do you feel?
G9: When my mother is hugging me, [I say]: "Oh, get off mom for God's sake!". She says: "Oh yes, after you grow up...".
G6: My father complains like this. I say it like this, on father's day he said like this: "Where is the kiss on your father's cheek?" [I said]: "Gosh!"... Then he started to argue. (Laughter).
G3: Sometimes my father comes to give me a kiss, then I [say]: "Go away". Then he [says]: "Gosh, this girl is getting wild". (Laughter)
SF: Why do you think young people do this? Are they embarrassed when their father hugs them?
Some: I am.
G1: Not me, I feel very proud. I feel proud to have my father and my mother, gosh, when I receive affection from them, I get really happy.
(Young women, group 1)

Interestingly both the young men and women mentioned that one of the reasons why affection from their parents changes as they become older, is because parents start to show more affection to younger siblings. Both genders explained that they commonly feel jealous of the affection their parents give to others once they grow up.

In terms of physical affection between parents, it also varies across families but generally seems to be limited. Many of the parents do not like to show affection in front of their children and so deliberately avoid it, whilst others explained that the lack of affection is because their partners are not affectionate. As the mothers discussed this further, it became clear that affection between parents is a taboo issue. In fact, the mothers who are affectionate with partners in front of their children felt the need to justify their actions:

M4: I never hid that [affection between parents], even because there are couples that [hide it], I date normally, kiss, hug...The children say: "Mother, what is this?" We do not fight, we never hid it [affection], it is normal. Some people ask: "Oh, you kiss?" [I reply]: "Oh, of course, he is my husband".

PF: But in general, are parents affectionate with each other or are they embarrassed?

M1: Look, me like, in the beginning I would be like, when my husband came to hug me, kiss me close to the children, then [I would say]: "Go away!" (Laughter) But then he used to complain and then I saw that the girls acted strangely, I don't know, perhaps thinking that we only fought. So I started to accept it, treating him with more affection, more love. For them [the daughters] it was then better. Then I saw that it is not a big deal to do this between husband and wife, it is no big deal, like she said, we are married, a hug, a kiss, its not scandalous.

(Mothers, group 1)

The young women confirmed that affection between parents is not common and that when it occurs, one of the parents usually tries to avoid it. Nevertheless, they explained that when they do see their parents being affectionate, it is a positive experience for them. It shows them that their parents love each other and that couples can be happy after many years together.

The survey participants were asked to state whether they had received any physical affection from their parents in the seven days before the survey or observed it between their parents. In terms of physical affection from their mothers, Table 6.16 shows that only about half had received any physical affection from their mothers in the last week. A greater proportion of young men in the older age group (18-24) compared to the younger ones (13-17) indicated that the question was not applicable to them (9% compared to 1%). Perhaps this difference is because the older males think that due to their age, physical affection occurs less and hence is not applicable to them. In the case of fathers, they were more affectionate towards young women than young men, even

though only a minority of both genders reported experiencing any affection. The younger females (aged 13-17) were also more likely to have received affection than the older ones (34% compared to 20% of the 18-24 year olds).

Table 6.16 Affection in the Home in the Last Seven Days

	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
In the last seven days, did your mother (or step-mother) touch you affectionately?							
Yes	60.9	50.9	58.0	57.9	49.2	55.3	56.3
No/I do not remember	38.0	41.4	39.0	39.8	45.7	41.3	40.6
Does not apply	1.1	7.8♥♥	3.0	2.3	5.1	3.2	3.1
N = 100%	279	116	395	470	197	667	1062*
In the last seven days, did your father (or step-father) touch you affectionately?							
Yes	23.7	14.8	21.1	33.5	20.3	29.6	26.4
No/I do not remember	65.2	64.4	65.0	55.1	60.4	56.7	59.7
Does not apply	11.1	20.9♥	14.0	11.4	19.3♥♥♥	13.8**	13.8
N = 100%	279	115	394	472	197	669	1063*
In the last seven days, did you see your parents touch each other affectionately?							
Yes	37.6	23.1	33.3	32.0	23.4	29.4	30.8
No/I do not remember	47.3	57.3	50.3	53.4	52.3	53.1	52.0
Does not apply	15.2	19.7♥	16.5	14.6	24.4♥♥	17.5	17.1
N = 100%	277	117	394	466	197	663	1057*

**p < 0.01 (for significant difference between genders, ages 13-24)
♥p < 0.05 ♥♥p < 0.01 ♥♥♥p < 0.001 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for each gender)
*There were 6 male and 9 female missing cases from the question about affection from mother, and 7 male and 7 female missing cases from the question about affection from father.

In terms of affection between parents, both genders reported that only a minority had seen their parents touch each other affectionately in the week before the survey - 33% of males and 29% of females. In addition, the younger males (13-17) reported significantly more than the older ones (18-24) that their parents had been affectionate (38% compared to 23%). This difference is perhaps because the younger males spend more time with their parents than the older ones and thus are consequently more likely to witness any affection between them. For the females, a greater proportion of the 18-24 year olds

stated that the question *did not apply* to them compared to those aged 13-17 (24% compared to 15%). This difference is likely to be because a greater proportion of the older females are married or cohabiting and thus living away from their parents.

In general, the survey findings are similar to those from the focus groups. Both genders receive more affection from their mothers but if fathers are affectionate they are more likely to be affectionate towards females. Age is an important factor, as the older the child becomes the less physical affection they receive from their parents. Affection between parents, does not frequently occur and seems to be a taboo behaviour in this community.

6.4.5 Nudity

The nudity of parents in front of young people and vice versa was explored in this study. According to the focus groups, fathers are generally more 'conservative' than mothers in terms of their behaviour and attitudes related to nudity. Fathers are less likely to change their clothes in front of their children than mothers, irrespective of gender. Many of the fathers argued that parents should not get changed in front of their children, even if they are very small, and some stated that walking around the house in a towel or in underwear is unacceptable for both parents and young people. The behaviour and attitudes of mothers varied more than that of fathers. Some mothers said they never got changed in front of their children whilst others did.

In most families, when there is some openness in relation to nudity, mothers are more likely to be nude in front of their daughters whilst fathers in front of their sons. It was interesting to hear that parents often change their behaviour related to nudity when they realise that their growing child is becoming aware of their bodies:

M1: Once when my son was 4 to 5 years old, then [in those days] I used to shower with him, I didn't care, no, it is a child really. Then one day he said: "Mum, why don't you put a plaster?" [The mother stands up and lifts her breasts and shows where her son suggested for her to put a plaster – a lot of laughter]. Because my breasts are sagging, so he wanted me to put a plaster. Then I never took a shower with him again...
(Mother, group 1)

G9: My father, before he used to change. Then, when I was 5 years old, he took off his underwear, he was there getting changed, then I went like this: “Father, what is this?” (Laughter) [Father replied]: “What? Go outside!” Then he never changed in front of me again.
(Young woman, group 1)

The survey participants were asked to state whether they had ever seen their mothers and fathers naked when they were a child, and how frequent they did so presently. The findings are depicted in Table 6.17 and show that young women are more likely than men to have seen their mother naked as a child (48% compared to 25%) and to do so currently (for example, 21% of them saw their mother naked *often* compared to 3% of men). In fact, about three-quarters of males stated they *never* saw their mothers naked at the time of the survey compared to a quarter of females.

In terms of fathers' nudity, males reported more than females that they had seen them naked as a child (24% compared to 7%), though for both sexes, this is only a minority. At the time of the survey, most young men and women stated they *never* saw their fathers naked (66% compared to 86%), but the males did so significantly more than the females (for example, 9% of males stated *sometimes* compared to 1% of females).

Table 6.17 Parental Nudity, Past and Present

Parental Nudity	Young Men			Young Women			All Young People 13-24
	13-17	18-24	13-24	13-17	18-24	13-24	
When you were a child, did you ever see your mother (or step-mother) naked?							
Yes	25.1	25.9	25.3	51.2	39.9	47.8	39.5
No	42.9	35.3	40.7	21.0	30.3	23.8	30.0
I do not remember	30.6	32.8	31.2	26.4	28.8	27.1	28.6
Does not apply	1.5	6.0	2.8	1.5	1.0♥	1.4***	1.9
N = 100%	275	116	391	463	198	661	1052*
Now at your age, do you tend to see your mother (or step-mother) naked?							
Never	75.9	67.5	73.4	25.4	21.8	24.3	42.7
Rarely	9.6	15.4	11.3	16.4	24.4	18.8	16.0
Sometimes	7.8	10.3	8.5	35.8	25.9	32.9	23.8
Often	3.2	1.7	2.8	20.0	23.4	21.0	14.2
Does not apply	3.6	5.1	4.0	2.4	4.6♥	3.0***	3.4
N = 100%	282	117	399	469	197	666	1065*
When you were a child, did you ever see your father (or step-father) naked?							
Yes	51.8	45.3	24.1	6.9	6.2	6.7	13.2
No	23.0	26.5	49.9	75.3	74.9	75.2	65.7
I do not remember	18.7	18.0	18.5	12.0	9.2	11.2	13.9
Does not apply	6.5	10.3	7.6	5.8	9.7	7.0***	7.2
N = 100%	278	117	395	465	195	660	1055*
Now at your age, do you tend to see your father (or step-father) naked?							
Never	67.7	62.4	66.2	89.6	78.2	86.2	78.8
Rarely	10.4	10.3	10.4	0.2	1.5	0.6	4.2
Sometimes	9.0	9.4	9.1	1.1	1.5	1.2	4.1
Often	1.4	0	1.0	0.2	0	0.2	0.5
Does not apply	11.5	18.0	13.4	8.9	18.8♥♥♥	11.8***	12.4
N = 100%	279	117	396	471	197	668	1064*

***p < 0.001 (for significant differences between genders, ages 13-24)
♥p < 0.05 ♥♥♥p < 0.001 (for significant differences between age-groups 13-17 and 18-24, for females)
*There were 10 male and 15 female missing cases from the question about mother's nudity when a child, 2 male and 10 female missing cases from the question about mother's nudity nowadays, 6 male and 16 female missing cases from the question about father's nudity when a child, and 5 male and 8 female missing cases from the question about father's nudity nowadays,

In general, both genders are more exposed to the nudity of mothers than of fathers, both in the past and at present (at the time of the survey). Fathers essentially rarely reveal their naked bodies to their children. Each gender sees

the parent of the same sex naked more than the other – i.e. females see mothers more and males see fathers more. These results are similar to those found in the focus groups, discussed earlier.

The attitudes and behaviour of young people related to their own nudity was also examined in the focus groups and it was found that their behaviours vary significantly from person to person and across homes. For example, in the same family there can be a young person who changes in front of their parents whilst another one does not. Nevertheless, it became apparent that it is common for many young people to become shy and to consequently stop changing in front of their parents when they begin puberty:

G8: Since I was 9 that I am embarrassed. I'm embarrassed of everyone, then when I go to change, I don't let anyone in the room, I'm embarrassed.

G9: With me, I stopped changing in front of others when I had my first period.

G8: Many times girls stop changing close to their mothers, like when breasts start to grow, then [girls] begin to get embarrassed. My sister even, [when she] started to grow breasts, then she gets embarrassed...

(Young women, group 1)

In general, young people react to being embarrassed in several ways: they do not let their parents in their room or bathroom whilst changing; they deliberately hide away or turn off the lights; or they wrap themselves in a towel. They are less likely to be embarrassed of the parent of the same gender, but this again differs across homes. One father even mentioned that his daughter showed him her breasts when they were beginning to grow.

In summary, the experience of nudity in the home varies but generally has the following pattern: mothers' behaviour and attitudes are more open than that of fathers; the extent of nudity is related to the gender of the individuals involved; parents may stop being nude in front of their children when they become older and start to ask questions; and young people commonly become embarrassed of their own nudity when they start going through puberty.

6.5 Conclusions of Chapter 6

This chapter has presented a wealth of background information concerning parental influence including: verbal sexual communication, parental sexual attitudes, quality of relationship between young people and parents, and several non-verbal sexual communication factors. The focus groups and survey findings showed that verbal sexual communication between young people and parents was generally low. When sex is discussed at home, it is more common for parents to do the talking than young people. Sons feel more comfortable discussing the subject with their fathers, whilst daughters would rather discuss it with their mothers. The fathers talked about sex less than the mothers, so young males tend to experience less verbal sexual communication with their parents than females. For both genders, dating ("*namoro*") was the most commonly talked about topic with mothers and fathers.

In the focus groups, the majority of parents were against young people having sex too early because of sexual risks and pregnancy. Nevertheless, parents were more against young women having sex than men, mainly because they are the ones who get pregnant. This gender-bias was also found in the survey. Both the focus groups and survey findings showed that most young people were closer to their mothers than to their fathers. They tended to spend more time with their mothers and talked to them more. Nevertheless, there was a lot of conflict in their relationships and having an 'absent' father was common. Both the young people and parents expressed a desire to have closer relationships.

In terms of the non-verbal sexual communication factors, the focus groups and survey showed that parental control varied by gender – young women generally experienced more control than young men and fathers were generally stricter than mothers. Parental non-verbal reactions to sex-related scenes on TV also varied by gender as parents were more likely to react and appear less comfortable in front of young women than young men. Most of the young people in the survey perceived their parents to have a 'good' relationship but according to the participants in the in-depth interviews, alcoholism and verbal and physical abuse in parental relationships was common. In terms of

physical affection, the focus groups and survey showed that both genders received more affection from their mothers and that with age, they received less affection from their parents. Physical affection between parents was infrequent and taboo. Nudity in the home varied but mothers generally were more open than fathers and young people commonly stopped being nude in front of their parents as puberty began.

Although the purpose of this chapter was not to examine the relationships between parental influence and young people's sexuality, a few examples of how parents seem to be influencing young people's reproductive and sexual health emerged, especially in the different ways in which they help perpetuate the existing gender gap. In essence, by treating young men and women differently in terms of verbal sexual communication and several aspects of non-verbal sexual communication, including parental control and reactions to sex on TV, parents communicate their biased sexual attitudes to their children which are likely to influence their own sexual attitudes and behaviours.

In the next two chapters, the relationships between the different parental influence factors and young people's sexuality is specifically explored. In Chapter 7, the statistical relationship between the parental influence factors and four aspects of young people's sexuality is examined. In chapter 8, the relationships are further explored using the data from the in-depth interviews.

Chapter 7: Parental Influence on Young People's Sexuality – Results from the Survey

In the two previous chapters, descriptive information regarding young people's sexuality (Chapter 5) and the parental influence factors (Chapter 6) were presented. This information provided the background for the analyses discussed in this and the following chapter. The aim of this chapter is to investigate the relationship between parental influence and young people's sexuality quantitatively, using logistic regression analysis. Four dependent variables of young people's sexuality are examined for males and females separately: sexual knowledge; sexual attitudes; timing of first sexual intercourse and condom use at first intercourse. The models for each of the four sexuality outcomes are presented in separate sections of this chapter. The significant relationships shown in each model are discussed and possible explanations for them are given. Policy implications of the findings and future research recommendations are considered in the concluding chapter of the thesis.

7.1 Logistic Regression Model-Building Process

The logistic regression models in this chapter were built following the process suggested by Hosmer & Lemeshow (2000, chapter 4), known as “purposeful selection” and is summarised next in seven steps.

- 1) The variables that were going to be included in the logistic regression model-building process were first selected. A list of these is provided in Table 7.1.1 in the Appendix of Chapter 7. In summary, there were a total of 25 parental influence independent variables selected. These variables measured the different parental influence factors presented earlier in the conceptual framework (see chapter 3) for mother and father separately, which included verbal sexual communication, parental sexual attitudes,

quality of relationship between parents and the different factors of non-verbal sexual communication.

There were also 4 parental demographic variables and 3 peer independent variables included. The parental demographic variables examined level of education and religiosity of both mother and father. Due to the significant social influence that peers play in young people's sexuality (Population Reports, 1995) it was decided that it would be important to include them in the analysis as well, in order to have more comprehensive models. The three peer variables measured extent of sex talk with peers, perception of peers having sex and condom use.

Finally, there were a total of 7 control variables. Four of these, were included in all the regression models: age, level at school, religiosity of young person and parental structure at home (*age* was substituted for *age at first sex* in the models examining the dependent variable *condom use at first sex*). The other two control variables (*ever had sex* and *partner at first sex*) were included in the models in which it was believed they needed to be controlled for.

- 2) Once all the independent variables were selected, the statistical relationship between each of these (all variables except for the control variables) and the dependent variables was examined, by fitting univariable logistic regression models. All of the variables that were found to have a p value of less than 0.25 were selected for the multivariate analysis (as recommended by Hosmer & Lemeshow, 2000). Tables 7.1.2 – 7.1.9 in the Appendix of Chapter 7 show the variables that were significant at a 25 percent level for each of the dependent outcomes.
- 3) After it was determined which parental influence independent variables were related to the dependent outcomes at a level below 0.25, correlations between these variables were conducted. Pairs of variables that were correlated at a level greater than 0.6 were noted. Only one of each pair was then chosen to be included in the multivariate analysis in order to avoid

collinearity. The variables to be included were chosen by examining the strength of each of their relationship with the dependent outcomes. The variable that had a smaller p value (that were more significantly related) was then kept and the others removed. The final parental influence variables that were included in the models after checking for correlations are also shown in Tables 7.1.2 – 7.1.9, in the Appendix of Chapter 7.

- 4) Once all of the important independent variables were identified ($p < 0.25$) and correlations checked, the remaining variables were then all included together (with the controls) in a multivariate model. The p values of the variables together were then examined. Those that were not significant at the 5% level were then removed, one by one, so that a smaller model was considered. The relevant control variables were kept, irrespective of their significance levels.
- 5) After the smaller model was reached – where all the independent variables were significant below $p = 0.05$ – it was checked to make sure that all of the variables that had been removed from the initial model were still not significant. These checks were done until it was clear that the smaller model was the best possible.
- 6) The next step was to assess the need to include interactions. Each of the possible interactions in the models were included, one by one, and their significance level was checked. Those that were found to be significant at a 5 percent level and that made sense theoretically were included in the final model. Three of the 8 final models presented in this chapter include interactions.
- 7) The last step in the model-building process was to test the ‘goodness-of-fit’ of each model, using the Pearson test. All of the models in this chapter passed the test (i.e. none were significant below $p = 0.05$) and the results of each are shown at the bottom of each table.

Why was this particular model-building process chosen? Initially, there were two other options that could have been chosen: a purely theoretical or a computer-only driven method (also known as 'step-wise'). In terms of the theoretically driven method, the researcher normally decides beforehand, which independent variables are believed to be important for the outcome of interest, and then all of these are included in the final model, irrespective of their significance levels. This procedure was not chosen for this study for two reasons. First, because this research is an exploratory study and examines many aspects of parental influence that have not been studied before (especially many of the components of non-verbal sexual communication). Therefore, it would have been wrong to determine in advance which variables to include in a specific model, due to the risk of missing out variables that are in fact significant, but were not thought to be important (due to lack of knowledge). Alternatively, all of the independent variables could have been included in the models, but this was not done for a second reason: there are too many independent variables and the sample size of the survey is too small for this and therefore not appropriate. Even then, this procedure would not have been advisable because as Hosmer & Lemeshow (2000) argue, the more variables there are in a model, the more likely errors are to occur.

The other procedure, the 'step-wise' method, is solely controlled by the computer. This is generally a good method to use in regression analysis, especially for exploratory studies, but the researcher has less control of the variable selection. The "purposeful selection" procedure outlined by Hosmer & Lemeshow (2000) is a less "deterministic method" and in a way combines the two other options outlined above. This is because, the researcher 'purposively' selects the variables, based on theory *and* the significant values of the relationships. Therefore, the final models are more likely to make sense both theoretically and statistically.

In the following sections, the final logistic regression models are presented for each of the four sexuality outcomes in turn. At the end of each section, a summary of the parental influence findings for each outcome is

provided and at the end of the chapter, these results are examined in relation to the study's hypothesis and previous literature.

7.2 Sexual Knowledge

Sexual knowledge is an important component of sexual health. It brings, for example, awareness of sexual risks such as unintended pregnancies and STIs and HIV/AIDS, as well as information regarding reproduction and how to control fertility. In Chapter 5, it was shown that about 31% of young men and 28% of young women answered only half or less of the 10 sexual knowledge questions correctly. Who are these young men and women who have 'low' sexual knowledge (i.e. that answered $\leq 50\%$ of the answers correctly)? Are any parental variables related to having 'low' knowledge? The models presented in Tables 7.1 and 7.2 for males and females respectively, help answer these questions.

Table 7.1 shows that two parental influence independent variables were significantly related to young men having low knowledge: the extent of sex talk with mother and the frequency that young men were allowed out at night by their parents. Firstly, those young men who '*rarely*' talked to their mothers about sex were 2.6 times more likely to have 'low' knowledge compared to those who talked '*often*'. This finding suggests that young men's sexual knowledge is related to the extent of verbal sexual communication they have with their mother. It is not possible to be sure of the direction of this relationship, due to the cross-sectional nature of this study, so it could be that talking more often with mothers helps young men have greater knowledge or that young men who have better knowledge are more likely to talk to their mothers about sex. Nevertheless, it is more likely that the first explanation is the correct one, since the focus groups showed that parents usually initiate sex talk. If this is the case, then this is an important result because it indicates that irrespective of level of education or talking about sex with peers (this latter variable was not significant and thus not included in the final model), talking to mothers in particular is key for sexual knowledge.

Secondly, those young men who were *never* allowed to go out at night by their parents were 4.3 times more likely to have ‘low’ knowledge in comparison to those who went out *often*. This result may be due to those who were *never* allowed to go out at night being less exposed to sexual information, which consequently affected their sexual knowledge.

Table 7.1 Logistic Regression Model For Young Men Having ‘Low’ Sexual Knowledge

Independent Variables	n	Odds Ratio	P	95% CI
Extent of sex talk with mother				
‘Often’	46	1.0		
‘Sometimes’	146	1.56	0.321	0.65 – 3.73
‘Rarely’	117	2.57*	0.035	1.07 – 6.17
Does not apply	23	1.97	0.268	0.59 – 6.54
Allowed out by parents at night				
Always	75	1.0		
Usually	92	1.58	0.250	0.73 – 3.43
Sometimes	148	1.11	0.781	0.53 – 2.31
Never	17	4.33*	0.023	1.22 – 15.34
Ever had sex				
Yes	195	1.0		
No	137	1.44	0.196	0.83 – 2.49
Age				
13-15 years	81	1.0		
16 years	76	0.42*	0.021	0.20 – 0.88
17 years	78	0.31**	0.004	0.14 – 0.69
18-24 years	97	0.37	0.053	0.14 – 1.01
Level at school				
At level for age	218	1.0		
Below level for age	114	1.95	0.093	0.89 – 4.26
Religiosity of young person				
Very religious	32	1.0		
Quite religious	76	2.25	0.120	0.81 – 6.23
Little religious	178	1.93	0.180	0.74 – 5.03
Not religious	27	0.13	0.069	0.01 – 1.18
Do not know/Does not apply	19	1.23	0.774	0.30 – 4.95
Parental structure at home				
Both parents	224	1.0		
One parent and step-parent	38	0.78	0.557	0.33 – 1.81
Lone parent	62	0.83	0.579	0.42 – 1.62
No parent	8	0.29	0.265	0.03 – 2.53

N = 332
Log likelihood = -181.70
LR chi2 (18) = 47.80
Prob > chi2 = 0.0002
Pseudo R2 = 0.1162
Pearson goodness-of-fit test: Prob > chi2 = 0.47

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01

In terms of the control variables, only age is shown to be significantly related to young men having 'low' sexual knowledge in Table 7.1. The youngest males (13-15) were significantly more likely to have 'low' knowledge than the 16 (OR = 0.4) and 17 year olds (OR = 0.3) - the odds ratios for the 18-24 year olds only approached significance. This finding is understandable because as young people become older, they are more likely to be exposed to sexual information (from a variety of sources) as well as become more interested in it. The fact that the youngest males (aged 13-15) were more likely to have 'low' sexual knowledge may have important policy implications because it is during this age group, that they are becoming sexual active (mean age at first intercourse is 14, as shown in Table 5.13, chapter 5).

In the case of young women having 'low' sexual knowledge, Table 7.2 shows that one of the parental influence variables is significant: whether they had ever talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with their mothers. Those young women who had *not* talked about this with their mothers were almost twice (OR = 1.95) as likely to have 'low' knowledge in comparison to those that had. This is a very interesting finding as the questions related to STIs are the ones that were answered most incorrectly. These results suggest that if females talk to their mothers about a specific sex-related topic, their knowledge related to that topic is better than those who do not.

Two parental demographic variables were also related with young women having 'low' sexual knowledge: level of education of mother and of father. Those whose mothers' and fathers' highest level of education was *primary* (for mothers) or *none* at all (for both parents) were more likely to have 'low' knowledge compared to those whose parents had a secondary and above level of education. This is an interesting finding and a possible explanation for this relationship is that those with more educated parents are also more likely to do better academically, which in this case was measured by their sexual knowledge. Alternatively, the more educated parents are, the more likely they are to transfer correct knowledge to their children - a possible explanation proposed by Stone *et al.* (2003).

Table 7.2 Logistic Regression Model For Young Women Having ‘Low’ Sexual Knowledge

Independent Variables	n	Odds Ratio	P	95% CI
Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with mother				
Yes	190	1.0		
No	340	1.95**	0.004	1.24 – 3.06
Does not apply	10	1.38	0.708	0.25 – 7.59
Level of education of mother				
Secondary and above	82	1.0		
Primary	372	2.10*	0.046	1.01 – 4.36
None	44	4.24**	0.006	1.53 – 11.76
Do not know/Does not apply	44	3.72*	0.022	1.21 – 11.50
Level of education of father				
Secondary and above	73	1.0		
Primary	307	1.26	0.534	0.61 – 2.58
None	60	3.45**	0.008	1.39 – 8.59
Do not know/Does not apply	102	1.43	0.451	0.57 – 3.60
Ever had sex				
Yes	154	1.0		
No	388	1.83*	0.020	1.10 – 3.06
Age				
13-15 years	138	1.0		
16 years	137	0.63	0.112	0.36 – 1.11
17 years	115	0.44*	0.012	0.23 – 0.83
18-24 years	152	0.20***	0.000	0.09 – 0.46
Level at school				
At level for age	366	1.0		
Below level for age	176	3.12**	0.001	1.60 – 6.10
Religiosity of young person				
Very religious	87	1.0		
Quite religious	185	1.04	0.907	0.55 – 1.95
Little religious	227	1.37	0.304	0.75 – 2.52
Not religious	30	0.84	0.749	0.28 – 2.47
Do not know/Does not apply	13	2.19	0.284	0.54 – 8.14
Parental structure at home				
Both parents	342	1.0		
One parent and step-parent	49	0.99	0.985	0.47 – 2.06
Lone parent	104	0.97	0.907	0.54 – 1.72
No parent	47	0.18**	0.005	0.06 – 0.59

N = 542
Log likelihood = -280.28
LR chi2 (20) = 86.39
Prob > chi2 = 0.0000
Pseudo R2 = 0.1335
Pearson goodness-of-fit test: Prob > chi2 = 0.72

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.001

More of the control variables for young women than for young men were found to be related to ‘low’ sexual knowledge, as shown in Table 7.2: ever had sex, age, level at school, and parental structure at home. Young women who never had sexual intercourse were 1.8 times more likely to have ‘low’

knowledge. This finding is expected because when someone is not sexually active, the exposure to sexual information and perhaps even one's interest in learning more about sex is not as great compared to when one has had sex. Interestingly however, 'ever having sex' was not found to be related to the sexual knowledge of the males (see Table 7.1). A possible explanation for this difference may be a result of the different ways in which the two genders perceive the importance of sex. As explained by the young people in the focus groups and in-depth interviews, sex is perceived as having more negative consequences for females - as they are the ones who get pregnant. As a result, it is possible that the sexually active young women make more effort to inform themselves about sex than the men, because of their perceived greater need to know about and prevent the risks.

In terms of age, the 16, 17 and 18-24 year old women were significantly less likely than the 13-14 year olds to have 'low' knowledge. This is similar to the finding obtained for the young men (Table 7.1) and a possible explanation was given earlier. Young women who were *below* the expected year group for their current age were more than 3 times more likely (OR = 3.1) to have 'low' sexual knowledge than those who were at the correct level. This finding might be expected and shows the importance of the information that females receive at school for their sexual knowledge. It was also expected that this variable - *level at school* - would have been a significant for the males. There is no obvious explanation why this was not found but the relationship seems to be somewhat important as it was significant below the 10 percent level ($p = 0.093$, shown in Table 7.1).

The females who did not live with any parent were also less likely to have 'low' sexual knowledge (OR = 0.2) compared to those who lived with both parents. This group of young women are likely to be the ones who were married or cohabiting (and so sexually active) and thus it is not surprising that they were significantly less likely to have 'low' knowledge.

7.2.1 Summary of Parental Influence on Sexual Knowledge

Tables 7.1 and 7.2 provide evidence of parental influence on the sexual knowledge of both young men and women. Firstly, both genders' sexual knowledge was related to the verbal sexual communication they had with their mothers. In particular, males talking '*rarely*' and females *not* talking about STIs and HIV/AIDS with their mothers was a significant predictor of them having 'low' knowledge. Secondly, for the young men, *never* being allowed to go out at night by their parents was also related to 'low' sexual knowledge. This relationship was not hypothesised in the conceptual framework of this study (see chapter 3) but a possible explanation was provided earlier. Thirdly, for the females, the level of education of their mothers and fathers was also important. Females whose fathers had *no* formal education and whose mothers highest level of education was either *primary* or *none*, were more likely to have 'low' sexual knowledge.

7.3 Sexual Attitudes

How do parents influence young people's sexual attitudes? In Tables 7.3 and 7.4, models for young men and women having 'liberal' sexual attitudes are presented in turn. About 47% of males and 27% of females were categorised as having 'liberal' sexual attitudes (shown in Table 5.10, of chapter 5). As explained in chapter 5, these were the young people who answered the 4 items about young people having sex with more 'liberal' answers. Specifically, these participants disagreed with the statement that it is wrong for males and females to have sex before marriage and agreed that young men and women should have many sexual experiences before marriage.

Table 7.3 shows that three parental influence variables were significantly related to young men having 'liberal' sexual attitudes: mother's sexual attitude, extent of sex talk with father and father's non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scenes on TV. Firstly, males who perceived their mothers to have '*liberal*' attitudes were 2.6 times more likely to have 'liberal' attitudes compared

to those whose mothers' had '*conservative*' attitudes. A possible explanation for this link is that young men's attitudes are influenced and developed by the modelling of their mothers' attitudes (Bandura, 1986). Young men may learn what is 'right' and 'wrong' to believe based on what they perceive their mothers to believe. The perception of their mothers' attitudes may essentially serve as a 'bench-mark' for their own attitudes.

Interestingly, those young men who answered *does not apply* to the question about their mothers' attitudes towards young people having sex, were also significantly more likely to have 'liberal' attitudes (OR = 2.7) compared to those whose mothers had '*conservative*' attitudes. It could be argued that those young men (who answered *does not apply*) were either those who did not have a relationship with their mothers or who just did not know what they believed. In any case, it is not clear what this is measuring and there is no obvious explanation for this finding.

The regression model showed that young men who talked to their fathers about sex '*often*' were more likely to have 'liberal' attitudes. When the interactions between the variables in the model were considered, it was found that the relationship between the *extent of sex talk with father* and young men's *sexual attitudes* was not constant over age – i.e. age modified the effect of the independent variable. Specifically, table 7.3 shows that talking about sex '*often*' with fathers significantly predicts '*liberal*' attitudes of young men age 17 (OR = 9.8) and 18-24 (OR = 5.3).

Table 7.3 Logistic Regression Model for Young Men Having 'Liberal' Sexual Attitudes

Independent Variables	n	Odds Ratio	P	95% CI
Mother's sexual attitude				
'Conservative'	79	1.0		
'Liberal'	233	2.58**	0.003	1.37 – 4.86
Does not apply	36	2.66*	0.040	1.04 – 6.78
Extent of sex talk with father				
'Sometimes/Never'	190	1.0		
'Often'	105	0.45	0.164	0.15 – 1.38
Does not apply	53	0.37	0.249	0.07 – 2.02
Extent of sex talk with father X Age (Interaction)				
'Often' X 13-15 years	25	1.0		
'Often' X 16 years	22	4.09	0.089	0.81 – 20.75
'Often' X 17 years	26	9.78**	0.007	1.87 – 51.16
'Often' X 18-24 years	32	5.29*	0.030	1.18 – 23.81
Father's non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scenes on TV				
Very uncomfortable/Uncomfortable	113	1.0		
Very comfortable	174	2.28**	0.004	1.30 – 4.00
Does not apply	61	2.50*	0.043	1.03 – 6.07
Ever had sex				
No	139	1.0		
Yes	209	1.74*	0.040	1.03 – 2.96
Age				
13-15 years	85	1.0		
16 years	79	1.04	0.932	0.42 – 2.57
17 years	79	0.85	0.732	0.32 – 2.21
18-24 years	105	0.93	0.887	0.32 – 2.67
Level at school				
At level for age	229	1.0		
Below level for age	119	0.65	0.243	0.31 – 1.34
Religiosity of young person				
Very religious	33	1.0		
Quite religious	81	4.35**	0.009	1.45 – 13.09
Little religious	188	5.02**	0.003	1.76 – 14.35
Not religious	29	8.32**	0.001	2.26 – 30.61
Do not know/Does not apply	17	4.76*	0.034	1.12 – 20.12
Parental structure at home				
Both parents	235	1.0		
One parent and step-parent	38	0.66	0.304	0.30 – 1.46
Lone parent	67	1.12	0.749	0.55 – 2.29
No parent	8	2.28	0.350	0.40 – 12.82

N = 348

Log likelihood = -204.97

LR chi2 (24) = 71.76

Prob > chi2 = 0.0000

Pseudo R2 = 0.1490

Pearson goodness-of-fit test: Prob > chi2 = 0.20

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01

The general relationship between *extent of sex talk with father* and the older young men's *sexual attitudes* is not surprising because as discussed in chapter 6, when fathers talk to males about sex, they often do so to encourage them to have sex. This was also found in the in-depth interviews and is furthered discussed in chapter 8. Thus it might not necessarily be the *extent* of sex talk with fathers that influences young men to have 'liberal' attitudes, but instead, the actual *content* of the communication. Through the verbal interaction, the fathers not only teach young men how they should view sex and behave, but they also communicate explicitly their own attitudes about sex. Therefore, those older young men who talk '*often*' are essentially given more '*liberal*' information from their fathers about sex than those who talk less frequently and so are more likely to model their fathers' attitudes.

It is interesting that this relationship is only significant for the *older* young men (17 and 18-24 year olds). A possible explanation for this finding is that the *content* of the sex talk that the older young men had with their fathers was different for the younger ones (13 –14 year olds). It is likely that as young men get older, the *content* of the sex talk with their fathers becomes more 'liberal'. For example, fathers are more likely to show approval and to encourage their sons to have sex when they are older. In addition, according to Table 6.4 in chapter 6, a significantly greater proportion of young men aged 18-24 had talked about their father's sexual experiences with their fathers compared to those aged 13-17. This finding supports the assumption that the content of verbal sexual communication becomes more 'liberal' with the increase of age. Therefore, the possible difference in the *content* of the communication may explain why the *extent* was not related to the younger males having more '*liberal*' attitudes but was for the older ones.

It should be mentioned that the numbers of participants shown for the interaction results in Table 7.3 are small (e.g. $n = 26$ for the 17 year olds and $n = 32$ for the 18-24 year olds that talk '*often*'). This may explain why there is a large drop in the odds ratios for the 18-24 year olds compared to those aged 17 (i.e. from 9.8 to 5.3).

Table 7.3 also shows that young men whose perceived their fathers to feel *very comfortable* when watching a sex-related scene on TV, were 2.3 times more likely to have 'liberal' attitudes compared to those whose fathers feel *very uncomfortable* or *uncomfortable*. There are two possible explanations for this relationship. Firstly, fathers who feel *very comfortable* watching sexual scenes on TV in front of their sons, are unlikely to prohibit their sons from watching the scenes. As a result, the scenes themselves may influence the males' attitudes by, for example, 'normalising' the sexual behaviour they see. Secondly, the fathers' feelings towards the sexual scenes (i.e. *very comfortable*) communicates their own 'liberal' attitudes non-verbally to their sons, because if the fathers' attitudes were more 'conservative' they would likely feel *less* comfortable with the scenes presented. This is supported by the qualitative data and was discussed earlier in Chapter 6 (see section 6.4.2.1). In summary, the interviews showed that parental reaction to sexual scenes on TV is a strong communicator of sexual attitudes, even in the absence of verbal comments. Hence through the non-verbal communication of their fathers' attitudes, young men are likely to be learning (modelling) about what their own sexual attitudes should be like, similar to learning from their mother's attitudes discussed earlier.

Interestingly, the young men who answered *does not apply* to the question about their fathers' feelings towards sexual scenes on TV were also more likely to have 'liberal' sexual attitudes (odds ratio 2.5) compared to those who perceived their fathers feeling *very uncomfortable/uncomfortable*. Perhaps those that answered *does not apply* are those whose fathers were absent and not present to react non-verbally to the sexual scenes on TV. If this is the case, then it is possible that this link is because these young men were more likely to watch the scenes on TV, and hence be influenced by them, compared to those whose fathers were *very uncomfortable* or *uncomfortable*.

Two of the control variables were significantly related to young men having 'liberal' attitudes: ever had sex and religiosity. Young men who *had sexual intercourse* were 1.7 times more likely to have 'liberal' attitudes compared to those that had not. This result is as expected as one is more likely to have sex if one agrees with that behaviour. In terms of religiosity, the *less*

religious the young men considered themselves to be, the greater was the likelihood that they had a 'liberal' sexual attitude. This finding is not surprising as religious beliefs are closely related to abstaining from sex until marriage and being monogamous after marriage and hence more 'conservative' attitudes. Interestingly, the few males ($n = 17$) that stated that they either *did not know* or that the question about their religiosity *did not apply* to them, also had a greater likelihood of having 'liberal' attitudes ($OR = 4.8$). A plausible explanation for this relationship is that not knowing one's religiosity or thinking that it is not applicable is essentially synonymous to not being religious, which is understandably linked to more 'liberal' attitudes.

In the case of young women having 'liberal' sexual attitudes, Table 7.4 shows that three parental influence variables were significantly related to this outcome: quality of relationship with mother, mother's sexual attitude and father's non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scenes on TV. Each of these are discussed in order next.

Before testing for interactions, the regression model showed that females that had a 'good' or 'bad' quality of relationship with their mothers were more likely to have 'liberal' attitudes compared to those who had an 'excellent' relationship. When the interactions between the variables in the model were considered, it was found that the relationship between *quality of relationship with mother* and young women's *sexual attitudes* was significantly modified by the variable *ever had sex*, as shown in Table 7.4 above. Specifically, having a 'good' or 'bad' quality of relationship with mothers (i.e. a *poorer* one compared to those with an *excellent* relationship) predicts '*liberal*' attitudes of young women who reported having had sexual intercourse. These young women were 2.9 times more likely to have '*liberal*' attitudes compared to those who had not had sex, but who also had a *poorer* quality of relationship with their mothers.

Table 7.4 Logistic Regression Model for Young Women Having ‘Liberal’ Sexual Attitudes

Independent Variables	n	Odds Ratio	P	95% CI
Quality of relationship with mother				
‘Excellent’	224	1.0		
‘Good/Bad’	332	1.14	0.618	0.68 – 1.91
Does not apply	18	1.17	0.829	0.28 – 4.80
Quality of relationship with mother X Ever had sex (Interaction)				
‘Good/Bad” X No sex	226	1.0		
‘Good/Bad’ X Had sex	106	2.87*	0.033	1.09 – 7.54
Mother’s sexual attitude				
‘Conservative’	295	1.0		
‘Liberal’	252	1.59*	0.030	1.05 – 2.43
Does not apply	27	1.11	0.846	0.39 – 3.16
Father’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scenes on TV				
Very uncomfortable	150	1.0		
Uncomfortable	215	1.61	0.083	0.94 – 2.76
Very comfortable	124	2.12*	0.013	1.17 – 3.81
Does not apply	85	1.28	0.532	0.59 – 2.81
Level of education of father				
Secondary and above	74	1.0		
Primary	325	1.55	0.204	0.79 – 3.04
None	67	3.47**	0.003	1.52 – 7.93
Do not know/Does not apply	108	1.74	0.180	0.77 – 3.89
Extent of sex talk with peers				
Never/Rarely	119	1.0		
Sometimes	258	1.63	0.114	0.89 – 2.97
Often	197	2.85**	0.001	1.54 – 5.25
Ever had sex				
No	406	1.0		
Yes	168	0.58	0.197	0.25 – 1.33
Age				
13-15 years	145	1.0		
16 years	139	1.11	0.722	0.63 – 1.95
17 years	126	0.97	0.916	0.52 – 1.79
18-24 years	164	0.48	0.078	0.21 – 1.08
Level at school				
At level for age	386	1.0		
Below level for age	188	1.73	0.098	0.90 – 3.30
Religiosity of young person				
Very religious	92	1.0		
Quite religious	190	1.67	0.158	0.82 – 3.42
Little religious	244	2.65**	0.005	1.33 – 5.26
Not religious	36	3.10*	0.027	1.14 – 8.45
Do not know/Does not apply	12	4.83*	0.028	1.18 – 19.75
Parental structure at home				
Both parents	359	1.0		
One parent and step-parent	52	0.64	0.259	0.30 – 1.38
Lone parent	110	1.33	0.335	0.74 – 2.40
No parent	53	0.75	0.498	0.33 – 1.71

N = 574
Log likelihood = -299.53
LR chi2 (26) = 72.55
Prob > chi2 = 0.0000
Pseudo R2 = 0.1080
Pearson goodness-of-fit test: Prob > chi2 = 0.15

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01

This is a very interesting finding and the fact that *ever had sex* moderated the influence of *quality of relationship with mother* on young women's sexual attitudes informs possible explanations for the primary relationship. It must be first highlighted that unlike the young men, *ever had sex* is not independently related to young women having '*liberal*' attitudes. This is understandable because as found from the focus groups, descriptive quantitative data and in-depth interviews, young women are more likely to have sex for more *intimate* reasons (such as being in love, in a committed relationship, etc) than the men. Therefore, just because the females have had sex, it does not mean that they will agree with all of the statements used to measure '*liberal*' attitudes, or more specifically, the statements that *males and females should have many sexual partners before marriage*.

The interaction between *quality of relationship with mother* and *ever had sex* shows that the sexually active females were more likely to agree with the statements and thus have '*liberal*' attitudes when they had a *poorer* quality of relationship with their mothers. This implies that having a less than '*excellent*', or a *poorer*, relationship with mothers, somehow modifies the way the sexually active females view sex. A possible explanation for this relationship is that a *poorer* relationship with one's mother results in young women not expecting as much closeness and intimacy from their sexual relationships, as they have not experienced or learned this from their relationship with their primary care giver. Their experience may therefore be a reason why they view sex more 'liberally' than the females who are closer to their mothers but who have also had sex. Alternatively, a *poorer* relationship with one's mother may result in young women having lower self-esteem. This lower self-esteem may lead to young women being less concerned about sexual risks (about harming themselves) and number of sexual partners, thus resulting in the more 'liberal' attitudes.

Similar to the males, Table 7.4 shows that the females whose mothers had a 'liberal' sexual attitude were also significantly more likely (OR = 1.6) to have 'liberal' attitudes. As explained earlier, this link may be a result of young women modelling the attitudes of their mothers, as they develop their own views. Also in agreement with the males, the young women who perceived

their fathers to feel *very comfortable* when watching a sex-related scene on TV, were 2.1 times more likely to have 'liberal' attitudes compared to those who felt *very uncomfortable*. The reasons for this relationship are probably similar to those described earlier, in that this non-verbal reaction possibly allows for a greater influence of the sexual scenes on the females' attitudes, as well as being a strong communicator of their fathers' more 'liberal' attitudes, which they learn and model.

In terms of the parental demographic variables, Table 7.4 shows that the level of education of fathers was also related to the young women's attitudes. In particular, those females whose fathers had *no* formal education were 3.5 times more likely to have 'liberal' sexual attitudes. A possible explanation for this relationship is that these young women were also likely to be low educational achievers and possibly have low expectations for their future and so be less motivated to avoid sex. Low achievement is also related to low self-esteem, which may be an alternative explanation.

One of the peer independent variables was a significant predictor of young women's sexual attitudes. Specifically, females who talked about sex *often* with their peers in comparison to those that *never/rarely* talked were 2.8 times more likely to have 'liberal' sexual attitudes. This finding may be because, the more frequently young women talk about sex with their peers, the more aware they become of their peers' sexual behaviour. This consequently 'normalises' the sexual behaviour of youth to these females and results in them having more 'liberal' attitudes.

In terms of the control variables, the females' religiosity was associated with their sexual attitudes. Similar to the young men, the less religious the young women considered themselves to be (specifically *little* religious (OR = 2.7) or *not* religious (OR = 3.1)), the more likely they were to have 'liberal' attitudes. As mentioned previously for the males, this relationship is understandable because religious values are essentially opposite to 'liberal' attitudes. The few females (n = 12) that stated that they either *did not know* or that the question about their religiosity *did not apply* to them, also have a

greater likelihood of having 'liberal' attitudes (OR = 4.8). This relationship was also found for the young men and a possible reason was given earlier.

7.3.1 Summary of Parental Influence on Sexual Attitudes

Tables 7.3 and 7.4 show that parents have an influence on the sexual attitudes of young men and women. Firstly, both genders were more likely to have 'liberal' attitudes if they perceived their mothers as being 'liberal' towards young people having sex and if their fathers felt *very comfortable* about sex-related scenes on TV. For the males, talking about sex *often* with their fathers was related to the 17-24 year olds having 'liberal' attitudes. This result was opposite to what was hypothesised (*hypothesis 1.2*), but shows the importance of the *content* of communication influencing young people's sexual attitudes and not just the extent (Miller et al., 1999). For the females who had sex, having a '*poorer*' quality of relationship with their mothers was related to 'liberal' attitudes. Lastly, all females who had a father with *no* formal education were more likely to have 'liberal' attitudes.

7.4 Timing of First Sexual Intercourse

Do parents influence the timing of first sexual intercourse? In this section, the relationship between parental variables and young people having 'early' sex is explored. This is an important sexuality indicator because the earlier young people have sex, the less likely they are to use contraception which makes them more 'at risk' of unintended pregnancies and STIs (Santelli et al., 1999). 'Early' sex in this study is defined as sexual intercourse that occurred before age 14 for males and age 16 for females. As the mean age at first intercourse for those who had ever had sex is 14 for young men and almost 16 for young women (15.8), those that had 'early' sex are essentially those that had sex for the first time below the average age. Approximately 26% of the males (aged 14-24) and 13% of the females (aged 16-24) reported having 'early' sex. The remaining young men and women either had sex later or not at all (thus the small proportions of those that engaged in 'early' sex).

Table 7.5 shows the regression model for young men having 'early' sex and two parental influence variables are shown to be significantly associated: mother's sexual attitude and quality of relationship with father. Young men who perceived their mothers to have a '*liberal*' sexual attitude towards young people having sex were 2.7 times more likely to have 'early' sex (before age 14) compared to those whose mothers had '*conservative*' attitudes. This finding is supported by previous research (Dittus et al., 1997, Resnick et al., 1997) and essentially shows that the perception of maternal disapproval of young people having sex reduces the likelihood of young men engaging in 'early' sex. A possible explanation for this relationship is that when young men are thinking and deciding about when to start having sex, they take into consideration whether their mothers disapprove or not of young people having sex. This relationship is similar to the previous finding shown in Table 7.5, that the males' own sexual attitudes were influenced by their mothers' attitudes. Essentially, it may be that young men not only use their mothers' attitudes as a 'model' for their own attitudes, but also as a guide for their behaviour.

Males who had either a '*good*' or '*bad*' relationship with their fathers were 2.9 times more likely to have 'early' sex compared to those who had an '*excellent*' relationship. Thus in essence, the *better* the relationship with their fathers, the less likely young men are to have sex before age 14. This is an important finding because studies that have investigated the influence of males' closeness to parents on the timing of sexual intercourse, have mainly focused on *mothers* (e.g. Jaccard et al., 1996) and have therefore not measured the important role that *fathers* may play in the timing of first sex. This finding is also interesting because one would expect that because most fathers are 'liberal' and in favour of their sons having sex (as found in both the focus groups and in-depth interviews), then those males who are closer to their fathers would be more likely to 'follow' their beliefs, and thus have 'early' sex. Instead, the result in Table 7.5 shows the opposite to be true, as it suggests that closeness to father is playing a different role. A possible explanation for this relationship is that when males have a *better* quality of relationship with their fathers, they develop *higher* levels of self-esteem. As discussed in the previous section and further in the next chapter, *higher* levels of self-esteem may result in young men

being more concerned about preventing sexual risks and so avoiding 'early' sex. Also, perhaps males with higher levels of self-esteem are less likely to succumb to peer pressures to have sex early. Lastly, young men with higher levels of self-esteem are probably less likely to have 'early' sex because of their need to feel loved, due to being close to their fathers.

In terms of peer influence, Table 7.5 shows that the more young men perceive their peers to be having sex, the greater is the likelihood that they will engage in 'early' sex. Specifically, those that perceived that *some* of their peers were having sex were 2.9 times more likely and those that believed that *most* were having sex were 4.2 times more likely to have 'early' sex than those who perceived that either *none* or *few* of their peers were having sex. This finding supports the results of studies examining the influence of peer modelling which generally shows that young people's perceptions of their peers' sexual behaviour is a strong predictor of sexual activity (Kinsman *et al.*, 1998, Romer *et al.*, 1994, Treboux and Busch-Rossnagel, 1995). As found in the focus groups and in the in-depth interviews, young men feel pressured by their peers to have sex in order to "be a man", and the earlier it happens, the better. Thus it is not surprising that those who had a greater perception of their peers having sex were more likely to have 'early' sex.

Only one of the control variables was strongly related to 'early' sex: age. Young men aged 18 – 24 were significantly less likely (OR = 0.29) to have 'early' sex in comparison to the 14 – 15 year olds. This finding provides further evidence that the age of first intercourse among Brazilian males is decreasing (BEMFAM, 1996). Those aged 18 – 24 are less likely to have had sex before age 14 because it was less common for them to do so then, compared to those currently aged 14 – 15.

Table 7.5 Logistic Regression Model for Young Men Having ‘Early’ Sex

Independent Variables	n	Odds Ratio	P	95% CI
Mother’s sexual attitude				
‘Conservative’	77	1.0		
‘Liberal’	242	2.74**	0.009	1.29 – 5.85
Does not apply	36	1.68	0.352	0.57 – 4.97
Quality of relationship with father				
‘Excellent’	57	1.0		
‘Good/Bad’	253	2.90*	0.017	1.21 – 6.93
Does not apply	45	2.38	0.157	0.72 – 7.90
Perception of peers having sex				
None/Few	74	1.0		
Some	136	2.91*	0.012	1.26 – 6.71
Most	145	4.15**	0.001	1.76 – 9.80
Age				
14-15 years	80	1.0		
16 years	81	0.56	0.145	0.25 – 1.22
17 years	85	0.54	0.130	0.24 – 1.20
18-24 years	109	0.29*	0.014	0.11 – 0.77
Level at school				
At level for age	225	1.0		
Below level for age	130	1.72	0.148	0.82 – 3.58
Religiosity of young person				
Very religious	31	1.0		
Quite religious	79	1.97	0.271	0.59 – 6.63
Little religious	188	1.98	0.243	0.63 – 6.24
Not religious	35	2.21	0.243	0.58 – 8.39
Do not know/Does not apply	22	0.70	0.675	0.13 – 3.74
Parental structure at home				
Both parents	241	1.0		
One parent and step-parent	39	1.04	0.919	0.46 – 2.35
Lone parent	67	0.96	0.925	0.44 – 2.10
No parent	8	0.73	0.716	0.13 – 3.99

N = 355
Log likelihood = -183.57
LR chi2 (17) = 39.10
Prob > chi2 = 0.0017
Pseudo R2 = 0.0963
Pearson goodness-of-fit test: Prob > chi2 = 0.54

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01

Table 7.6 shows the regression model for young women having sex before the age of 16 and two parental influence variables were found to be significantly related: number of sex topics that could never be talked about with their mothers and the extent to which they were allowed out by their parents at night. Each of these are discussed in turn next.

Table 7.6 Logistic Regression Model for Young Women Having ‘Early’ Sex

Independent Variables	n	Odds Ratio	P	95% CI
Number of sex topics that could never be talked about with mother				
0 topics	147	1.0		
1 – 10 topics	282	1.06	0.899	0.44 – 2.55
Number of sex topics that could never be talked about with mother X Level at school (Interaction)				
1 – 10 topics X At level for age	159	1.0		
1 – 10 topics X Below level for age	123	11.94*	0.011	1.78 – 80.08
Allowed out by parents at night				
Never	53	1.0		
Sometimes	257	1.20	0.736	0.41 – 3.49
Usually	67	2.14	0.231	0.62 – 7.46
Always	52	9.68**	0.001	2.64 – 35.45
Religiosity of father				
Very religious	44	1.0		
Quite religious	69	1.02	0.980	0.15 – 7.12
Little religious	168	3.03	0.187	0.58 – 15.70
Not religious	80	7.37*	0.022	1.34 – 40.69
Do not know/Does not apply	68	1.87	0.503	0.30 – 11.70
Age				
16 years	145	1.0		
17 years	123	0.72	0.415	0.33 – 1.58
18-24 years	161	0.07***	0.000	0.02 – 0.22
Level at school				
At level for age	241	1.0		
Below level for age	188	0.36	0.249	0.06 – 2.04
Religiosity of young person				
Very religious	71	1.0		
Quite religious	145	0.95	0.936	0.30 – 3.03
Little religious	179	1.45	0.500	0.49 – 4.30
Not religious	25	4.21	0.061	0.94 – 18.85
Do not know/Does not apply	9	12.38*	0.011	1.78 – 86.02
Parental structure at home				
Both parents	269	1.0		
One parent and step-parent	32	0.77	0.687	0.22 – 2.75
Lone parent	88	1.69	0.243	0.70 – 4.11
No parent	40	1.21	0.785	0.31 – 4.80

N = 429
Log likelihood = -125.16
LR chi2 (19) = 74.40
Prob > chi2 = 0.0000
Pseudo R2 = 0.2291
Pearson goodness-of-fit test: Prob > chi2 = 0.26

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.001

Prior to testing for interactions, the regression model showed that young women who believed they *could never talk about 1 – 10 sex topics with their mothers* were more likely to have ‘early’ sex compared to those who believed

there were *no* topics they could never talk about. When the interactions between the variables in the model were considered, it was found that the relationship between *number of sex topics that could never be talked about with mother* and *timing of first sexual intercourse* was significantly modified by the variable *level at school*, as shown in Table 7.6. Specifically, believing that one could *never talk about 1 – 10 sex topics with their mother* significantly predicted ‘early’ sex for the females who were below the correct school level for their age. These young women were 11.9 times more likely to have ‘early’ sex than those who were at the correct school level, but who also believed they could *never talk about 1 – 10 sex topics* with their mothers.

Before providing a possible reason for this relationship, it must first be explained that the variable *number of sex topics that could never be talked about with mother* is believed to be measuring *openness* in sex talk between mothers and daughters, since it asks about the extent of ‘freedom’ that exists for females to talk about different sexual topics with their mothers. Thus the finding is essentially showing that the *less* open young women below the correct school level for their age believe they can be with their mothers, the *more* likely they are to engage in ‘early’ sex. A possible explanation for this relationship is that these young women (who feel they cannot be open with their mothers *and* are behind at school) are also more likely to have lower levels of self-esteem. Feeling that one cannot be open with one’s mother about certain sexual topics *and* being behind at school is likely to affect one’s self-esteem. Perhaps this is because, when young women feel that they could never talk about certain sexual topics with their primary care giver, at a time when sexuality is so important in their lives, then they are more likely to feel insecure. When this is combined with being behind at school (which in itself lowers self-esteem), then the effect on their self-esteem is even larger, and results in a greater likelihood of them engaging in ‘early’ sex.

The other parental influence variable related to young women having ‘early’ sex is the extent to which they were allowed out by their parents at night. Young women who were allowed out at night *always* were 9.7 times more likely to have ‘early’ sex than those who were *never* allowed out at night. This finding

is as expected because being allowed out *always* means that these females had more opportunities to have sex than those who were *never* allowed out.

Nevertheless, what is particularly interesting about the above finding is that it is *only* being allowed out *always* that is significantly associated to having sex 'early'. That is, those who reported being allowed out at night *sometimes* or *usually* were not more likely to engage in 'early' sex, despite going out more (and so having more opportunities for sex) than those who *never* went out. Thus, it seems that it is the *complete lack* of control that is key to having 'early' sex. A possible explanation is that when there is no parental control about going out at night, young women are less likely to take risks seriously because they are not emphasised by their parents (even though Samambaia town is very dangerous, particularly at night). In contrast, those who go out at night, but not as frequently as *always*, are naturally more aware of dangers because the existence of some control, teaches them that. Another possible reason is that a lack of parental control affects the self-esteem of girls, as it may communicate to them less love and concern by their parents. Their consequent lower levels of self-esteem may explain their greater likelihood in having 'early' sex.

One of the parental demographic variables is significantly related to young women having 'early' sex: religiosity of father. In particular, compared to those whose fathers were *very religious*, those who stated their fathers were *not religious* were 7.4 times more likely to have 'early' sex. This is an interesting finding and a possible explanation is that those fathers who are *very religious* are also closer to their daughters and have more 'conservative' sexual attitudes, due to their religious family values. Therefore, it may be that fathers' religiosity is also measuring 'quality of relationship' and 'father's sexual attitude'. (Both these variables were found to be significant below 0.25 when related to 'early' sex but were not included in the final model due to being highly correlated to 'strictness of father').

In terms of the control variables, young women aged 18 – 24 were significantly less likely to have 'early' sex (OR = 0.07) than those aged 16. This is a similar finding to that of the males and an explanation for the relationship

was provided earlier. The few females ($n = 9$) that stated that they either *did not know* or that the question about their religiosity *did not apply* to them, were 12.38 times more likely to engage in 'early' sex. As discussed in the previous section that examined the females' sexual attitudes, this relationship is understandable because not knowing one's religiosity, or thinking that it is not applicable, shows that these females are unlikely to have any religious values, which oppose 'early' sex. This finding however may not be robust due to the small number of participants and as indicated by the large confidence interval (1.8 – 86.0).

7.4.1 Summary of Parental Influence on the Timing of First Sexual Intercourse

Tables 7.5 and 7.6 provide evidence of parental influence on the timing of young people's first sexual intercourse. Young men were more likely to have 'early' sex if they perceived their mothers to be '*liberal*' towards young people having sex and if they had a '*poorer*' quality of relationship with their fathers. In the case of young women, those below the correct school level for their age had a greater likelihood of having 'early' sex if they believed they could *never* talk about 1 or more sex topics with their mothers. All females were more likely to have 'early' sex if they were allowed out at night by their parents *always* and had a father that was *not* religious.

7.5 Condom Use at First Intercourse

Tables 7.7 and 7.8 depict regression models for condom use at first intercourse for the young men and women respectively. About 36% of the males and 39% of the females who reported having sex stated that a condom was used during their first intercourse. In Table 7.7, it can be seen that for young men, three parental influence variables were related to condom use at first intercourse: whether they had ever talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with their mothers, their fathers' non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scenes on TV and the extent to which they were allowed out by their parents at night.

The first finding in Table 7.7 is that young men who had talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with their mothers were 2.2 times more likely to have used a condom at first intercourse compared to those who had not talked about these topics. This is an interesting finding, not only because it confirms the importance of verbal sexual communication between males and their mothers, but also because it fits well with the qualitative findings of this study. The focus groups and in-depth interviews both confirmed that most young men do not use condoms because they believe its main purpose is to prevent STIs and HIV/AIDS, which they are generally not concerned about. In terms of preventing pregnancies, most males believe it is the females' responsibility and that other contraceptive methods are used for that. Mothers were also reported to focus mainly on pregnancy when 'warning' their sons about sexual risks. Despite this background however, the regression result shows that sons talking to their mothers about STIs and HIV/AIDS, is positively associated with their condom use. There are two possible explanations for this finding. First, when males talk to their mothers about STIs and HIV/AIDS, their knowledge about these risks is improved (as shown in Table 7.1), which helps them acknowledge the need for prevention, resulting in greater condom use. In addition, perhaps the experience of talking with one's *mother* (a woman) in particular about STIs and HIV/AIDS, helps young men feel more confident about talking about the same risks with their partner, which also results in greater condom use.

Table 7.7 Logistic Regression Model for Condom Use at Young Men's First Intercourse

Independent Variables	n	Odds Ratio	P	95% CI
Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with mother				
No	133	1.0		
Yes	77	2.15*	0.035	1.06 – 4.38
Does not apply	9	1.08	0.930	0.20 – 5.92
Father's non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scenes on TV				
Very uncomfortable/Uncomfortable	60	1.0		
Very comfortable	120	2.67*	0.018	1.19 – 5.99
Does not apply	39	0.93	0.903	0.28 – 3.08
Allowed out by parents at night				
Always	65	1.0		
Usually	61	1.11	0.813	0.47 – 2.65
Sometimes/Never	93	2.50*	0.024	1.13 – 5.55
Partner at first sex				
Namorada(o)	42	1.0		
Someone I just met or knew for a short time	42	0.66	0.403	0.24 – 1.77
Someone I knew for a while	83	0.35*	0.024	0.14 – 0.87
Cousin or other relative	42	0.15**	0.001	0.05 – 0.48
Prostitute	5	3.00	0.382	0.26 – 35.14
Other	5	0.74	0.780	0.09 – 5.93
Age at first sex				
12 – 13 years	93	1.0		
14 – 15 years	81	1.54	0.265	0.72 – 3.29
16 – 19 years	45	2.92*	0.019	1.19 – 7.19
Level at school				
At level for age	118	1.0		
Below level for age	101	1.78	0.088	0.92 – 3.47
Religiosity of young person				
Very/Quite religious	61	1.0		
Little religious	122	0.87	0.725	0.41 – 1.85
Not religious	23	0.84	0.773	0.26 – 2.72
Do not know/Does not apply	13	1.12	0.874	0.29 – 4.34
Parental structure at home				
Both parents	144	1.0		
One parent and step-parent	22	0.23*	0.027	0.07 – 0.85
Lone parent	47	1.20	0.706	0.46 – 3.10
No parent	6	1.16	0.884	0.15 – 8.97

N = 219
Log likelihood = -117.15
LR chi2 (20) = 55.34
Prob > chi2 = 0.0000
Pseudo R2 = 0.1911
Pearson goodness-of-fit test: Prob > chi2 = 0.47

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01

The second parental influence variable that was related to condom use at first intercourse is also interesting. As shown in Table 7.7, males whose fathers appeared to be *very comfortable* when watching sex-related scenes on TV were 2.7 times more likely to use a condom at first intercourse than those

whose fathers were either *very uncomfortable* or *uncomfortable*. This finding is somewhat surprising because the sexual scenes on Brazilian TV frequently portray sex in a way that does not encourage safer sexual practices. Nevertheless, maybe this relationship exists because when fathers are perceived as being *very comfortable*, then it is likely that they also communicate the same feeling to their sons when TV programmes that allude to sex in a more educational manner and which encourage condom use are shown. The truth however, is that it is not possible to tell from this measure which kinds of sex-related scenes specifically the fathers felt *very comfortable* about. However, supposing this measure does mean that fathers do appear to feel *very comfortable* when scenes that encourage condom use in particular are shown, then its relationship with their sons condom use at first intercourse is more understandable. A possible explanation for the link is that the fathers' *very comfortable* non-verbal reaction communicates to their sons that they agree with the recommended behaviour ("use a condom"), which then serves to re-emphasise the media's message, thus resulting in an increased likelihood of condom use.

According to Table 7.7, young men who were allowed out by their parents at night either *sometimes* or *never* were 2.5 times more likely to use a condom at first intercourse compared to those who were *always* allowed out. This relationship may be because greater parental control teaches young men to take dangers more seriously, which translates to greater condom use (this is discussed further in the next chapter). Alternatively, maybe these males were more likely to use condoms because they were more concerned of getting in trouble with their parents (if their partner were to get pregnant or if an infection occurred), because their parents were more controlling than those who let their sons go out at night *always*.

Three of the control variables were related to condom use at first intercourse. First, young men were less likely to use a condom if their partner at first intercourse was *someone they had known for a while* (OR = 0.4) or a *cousin or other relative* (OR = 0.2) compared to those whose first partner was a *namorada(o)*. According to the in-depth interviews, when young men have sex

with *someone they have known for a while* (which is likely to be a friend) or a *cousin*, sexual intercourse is more likely to “just happen”, or be unplanned, compared to when the partner is a *namorada(o)*, or someone the young men are involved in a romantic, committed relationship with. Based on these findings, the results of the regression become more understandable as condom use is less likely to occur when sex is unplanned and a condom is consequently not available.

Age at first intercourse was also significantly related to condom use. Males who had their first sexual intercourse between the ages of 16 to 19 were 2.9 times more likely to use a condom compared to those who were 12 to 13 years old. In essence, this relationship shows that having intercourse at an older age results in a greater likelihood of condom use. This result is as expected because older males are generally more mature and knowledgeable about sexual risks than younger ones and is supported by the findings of other research (e.g. Santelli *et al.* 1999). Young men who lived with a parent and a step-parent were significantly less likely to report (OR = 0.2) having used a condom at first intercourse than those who lived with both parents. There is no clear explanation for this relationship and it may be an anomaly due to the few numbers of males in that category (n = 22).

In the case of young women, Table 7.8 shows that one parental influence variable was related to condom use at first intercourse: extent of sex talk with father. Interestingly, females who ‘*never*’ talked about sex with their fathers were significantly less likely (OR = 0.4) to have used a condom at first intercourse compared to those that talked either ‘*often*’ or ‘*sometimes*’. What is fascinating is that it is the extent of sex talk with *fathers*, and not with mothers, that is a strong predictor of condom use. Considering that both the focus groups and in-depth interviews showed that condom use is mainly controlled by men and that females frequently have to ask them to use one (often risking their own reputation whilst doing so), it may be that being able to talk with one’s father about sex, who is of course a *man*, empowers females to talk to their partners about sex and negotiate condom use.

Table 7.8 Logistic Regression Model for Condom Use at Young Women's First Intercourse

Independent Variables	n	Odds Ratio	P	95% CI
Extent of sex talk with father				
'Often/Sometimes'	53	1.0		
'Never'	108	0.35**	0.008	0.16 – 0.76
Does not apply	17	0.56	0.404	0.14 – 2.19
Religiosity of father				
Very/Quite religious	38	1.0		
Little/ Not religious	110	0.32*	0.022	0.12 – 0.85
Do not know/Does not apply	30	0.57	0.381	0.16 – 2.02
Perception of peers having sex				
Most	105	1.0		
None/Few/Some	73	2.75**	0.007	1.31 – 5.78
Partner at first sex*				
<i>Namorado</i>	118	1.0		
Someone I just met or knew for a short time	6	0.43	0.466	0.05 – 4.09
Someone I knew for a while	16	0.54	0.329	0.16 – 1.87
Fiancé/Husband	34	0.53	0.232	0.18 – 1.51
Other	4	0.20	0.242	0.01 – 2.96
Age at first sex				
12 – 14 years	44	1.0		
15 – 16 years	70	1.99	0.140	0.80 – 4.97
17 – 20 years	64	1.89	0.241	0.65 – 5.49
Level at school				
At level for age	88	1.0		
Below level for age	90	0.74	0.472	0.33 – 1.67
Religiosity of young person				
Very religious	24	1.0		
Quite religious	40	0.96	0.944	0.27 – 3.41
Little religious	95	2.73	0.103	0.82 – 9.16
Not religious	15	0.58	0.527	0.10 – 3.20
Do not know/Does not apply	4	0.65	0.759	0.04 – 10.31
Parental structure at home				
Both parents	90	1.0		
One parent and step-parent	13	0.39	0.195	0.09 – 1.63
Lone parent	39	0.61	0.335	0.23 – 1.66
No parent	36	0.47	0.175	0.16 – 1.40

N = 178
 Log likelihood = -100.28
 LR chi2 (19) = 37.14
 Prob > chi2 = 0.0076
 Pseudo R2 = 0.1563
 Pearson goodness-of-fit test: Prob > chi2 = 0.11

*p < 0.05 **p < 0.01
 * 'Cousin' was dropped from this item due to too few cases (n=1)

One of the parental demographic variables was significantly related to condom use at young women's first intercourse: religiosity of father. Females whose fathers were *less* religious (either *little* or *not*) compared to those whose fathers were *more* religious (either *very* or *quite*) were significantly less like (OR

= 0.3) to have used a condom at first intercourse. There is no obvious explanation for this relationship but it is interesting to note that it is the *fathers'* religiosity that is important and that the same variable was also related to the timing of first sexual intercourse of females (discussed earlier, see Table 7.6).

The finding regarding peers is also interesting. Young women who perceived that either *none*, *few*, or *some* of their peers had sex were 2.8 times more likely to use a condom at first intercourse compared to those who perceived that *most* of their peers had sex. A possible explanation for this link is that when females perceive that having sex is very common amongst their peers, then the 'seriousness' of sex is diminished. In other words, when females perceive that *most* of their peers are having sex, then they are more likely to rationalise that sex cannot be 'that risky', because if it was, then fewer of their peers would be having sex. Because condom use is mainly controlled by men, then perhaps females' less sense of risk (due to most peers having sex) results in them being less likely to negotiate condom use with their partners, thus accounting for a smaller likelihood in condom use.

Interestingly, none of the control variables was found to be significantly related to condom use at first intercourse for the young women (Table 7.8) as it was for the young men (Table 7.7). This is not surprising considering that condom use is mainly controlled by the males, and therefore variables such as *age at first sex* is not significant for the females. Nevertheless, because young men do generally control condom use, one would expect that *who* the young women had their first intercourse with would be an important predictor. However, the lack of a significant result may be due to the small numbers of young women who reported that their first partner was someone else than their *namorado*. Perhaps it would have been better if this variable examined *length of relationship with first partner* instead of *who* the partner was.

7.5.1 Summary of Parental Influence on Condom Use at First Intercourse

Tables 7.7 and 7.8 show that parents influence condom use at first intercourse of both genders. First, young men were more likely to use a condom at first intercourse if they had talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with their mothers.

Second, condom use was also more likely if young men perceived their fathers to feel *very comfortable* about sex-related scenes on TV. This relationship was opposite to that anticipated (*hypothesis 4.2*), but a possible explanation was given earlier. Third, young men were more likely to use a condom if they were allowed out by their parents at night less frequently (*sometimes* or *never*). For the young women, condom use was more likely to occur for if they had talked about sex with their fathers '*often*' or '*sometimes*'. Lastly, young women were more likely to use a condom at first intercourse if their fathers were *very* or *quite* religious.

7.6 Conclusions and Discussion of Chapter 7

The logistic regression analysis presented in this chapter provides evidence of parental influence on young people's sexual knowledge, attitudes, timing of first sex and condom use at first sex. The parental findings for each of the 4 sexuality outcomes are summarised in Table 7.9.

Table 7.9 Summary of the Findings regarding Parental Influence on the Four Sexuality Outcomes Explored in this Chapter

Sexuality Dependent Variable	Parental Influence	
	Young Men	Young Women
1) 'Low' Sexual Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>'Rarely'</i> talking with mother about sex. ▪ <i>Never</i> being allowed out at night by parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Not having</i> talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with mother. ▪ Mother with <i>primary</i> or <i>no</i> formal education. ▪ Father with <i>no</i> formal education. ▪ <i>Not</i> living with parents (negative relationship).
2) 'Liberal' Sexual Attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mother with <i>'liberal'</i> attitudes and <i>'absence'</i> of mother. ▪ Talking with father about sex <i>often</i>, for 17-24 year olds. ▪ Father feeling <i>very comfortable</i> about sex-related scenes on TV and <i>'absence'</i> of father. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Having a <i>poorer</i> (good/bad) quality of relationship with mother, for young women who have had sex. ▪ Mother with <i>'liberal'</i> attitudes. ▪ Father feeling <i>very comfortable</i> about sex-related scenes on TV. ▪ Father with <i>no</i> formal education.
3) Having 'Early' Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mother with <i>'liberal'</i> attitudes. ▪ A <i>'good'</i> or <i>'bad'</i> quality of relationship with father. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Never</i> being able to talk about <i>1 or more</i> sex topics with mother, for young women below school level for age. ▪ Being allowed to go out at night <i>always</i>. ▪ Father being <i>not</i> religious.
4) Using a Condom at First Intercourse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Having</i> talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with mother. ▪ Father feeling <i>very comfortable</i> about sex-related scenes on TV. ▪ Being allowed out at night <i>sometimes</i> or <i>never</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Talking to father about sex <i>often</i> or <i>sometimes</i>. ▪ Father being <i>very</i> or <i>quite</i> religious.

In general, this chapter has shown that each of the parental influence components was related to either one or more of the sexuality outcomes. *Verbal sexual communication with mother* was related to the sexual knowledge of both genders and condom use of males. For both dependent variables, the experience of sex talk with mothers was related to more positive outcomes – better sexual knowledge and condom use at first intercourse. *Verbal sexual communication with fathers* was related to the sexual attitudes of males and to condom use during the first intercourse of females. There is no evidence that talking about sex with parents is linked to 'early' sex, which was a concern of the parents in the focus groups and in-depth interviews. In fact, it appears that

when females, who are behind at school, believe they cannot be *open* with their mothers about several sexual topics, they are more likely to have 'early' sex.

In terms of *parental sexual attitudes*, *mother's sexual attitude* was related to the sexual attitudes of both genders and the timing of first sex of males. *Quality of relationship with mother* was related to the sexual attitudes of females who had sex, whilst *relationship with father*, was related to the timing of first sex of males.

Lastly, two non-verbal sexual communication factors appeared to be significantly important. First, parental control, measured specifically by *the extent to which young people were allowed out at night by their parents*, was found to be related to the sexual knowledge and condom use of young men and the timing of first sex of young women. Second, *fathers' non-verbal feelings towards sexual scenes on TV* was related to the sexual attitudes of both genders and condom use at first intercourse of males. No evidence of the influence of the other non-verbal sexual communication factors (i.e. quality of relationship between parents, physical affection, and nudity) on either of the four sexuality outcomes was found from the quantitative data.

Evidence of the influence of parental demographics was also provided in this chapter, specifically for the females. The *level of education* of both parents was important for the sexual knowledge of young women, whilst fathers' education level was related to their sexual attitudes. *Fathers' religiosity* was associated to the timing of first sex and condom use of the females.

The above results highlight two interesting points related to the findings in this chapter. First, parental influence on young people's sexuality differs for males and females. Second, *mothers* and *fathers* influence each gender and each sexuality outcome differently. In essence, the results confirm that parental influence is complex and that future studies not only need to investigate the influence of *mothers* and *fathers* on each gender separately, but explanations for the differing effects need to be explored. It is not clear why, for example, it is

the quality of relationship with *fathers*, and *not* mothers, that influences the timing of first sex of males.

Limitations

Despite the important findings that have been shown in this chapter, there are limitations to the data that need to be acknowledged. Firstly, quantitative data are open to errors such as that of reporting bias. Due to the sensitive nature of the study and the taboo related to sexuality, participants may not accurately report their sexual behaviour thus resulting in reporting bias (Campbell *et al.*, 1999; Zenilman *et al.*, 1995). Biases such as these can affect the reliability of the models. This kind of bias may be a possible explanation why a greater amount of variance is accounted for by the females' regression model regarding 'early' sex (Table 7.6) than the males (Table 7.5). The fact that the model of the young men explains about 10% of the variance compared to 23% of the young women, may be a result of some of the males having lied about their age at first sex, specifically, decreasing their age, due to 'earlier' sex being admired by many.

Another limitation is that more evidence of parental influence may not have been shown, due to problems of measurement validity. For example, for one of the variables of parental control, the participants were asked to state how 'strict' they believed their mother and father to be. The problem with this measure of 'parental strictness' is that what one participant may regard as 'strict', may be different from the other. As a result, 'parental strictness' may not have been found to be a significant predictor of any of the four sexuality outcomes, due to it being a poor quantitative measure of parental control. Questionnaire items need to be more specific and refrain from using conceptual terms (such as 'strictness') that are hard to describe and likely to vary in its understanding. For this study, more specific examples of parental control should have been used instead of 'parental strictness'. The fact that the only specific measure of parental control used, 'extent to which parents allow young person to go out at night', was found to be significant several times, shows the importance of parental control and the need to measure it in more detail.

Despite the limitations of the survey data discussed above, the present chapter, as well as chapters 5 and 6, show evidence of consistency and reliability in the quantitative data. Many findings that one would expect to see have been shown (for example, that age is related to sexual knowledge), thus providing greater confidence in the associations presented in this chapter. In the following chapter, results based on the analysis of the in-depth interviews provide further evidence and a deeper understanding of parental influence on young people's sexuality.

Chapter 8: Parental Influence on Young People's Sexuality – Results from the In-depth Interviews

In the previous chapter, parental influence on different sexuality outcomes was examined using the survey data. The objective of this chapter is the same as the previous chapter, but using data from the in-depth interviews. The analysis of parental influence focuses on three¹ aspects of young people's sexuality: sexual attitudes, timing of first intercourse and general contraceptive use.

In-depth interviews were used to explore parental influence on young people's sexuality not only because they could provide further insight and evidence (in addition to the survey), but also because they allow complex parental factors - such as *quality of relationship* and *parental control* –to be examined more deeply. As argued at the end of the previous chapter, a limitation of the survey method is that it is often difficult to measure complex issues with simple, closed questions. In-depth interviews, on the other hand, enable these aspects to be explored at length.

The results in this chapter are based on the analysis of the in-depth interviews of 36 young men and women, 22 of their mothers and 8 of their fathers (for explanation of analysis and number of interviews, see Chapter 4). It was found that, in most cases, the information from the interviews with the parents was very similar to their respective son/daughter. In fact, it was interesting to note that they frequently used the same family stories and examples in their interviews. Differences in information were mainly limited to personal details. For example, some of the young people did not know the ages of their parents or when they had their last disagreement, whilst some parents were unaware that their son/daughter was dating a particular person. However, in terms of their accounts about issues related to each other – such as their relationship and extent of verbal sexual communication – their reports were found to be very similar. As a result, the interviews with the parents were mainly

¹ See discussion section of this chapter for explanation of why parental influence on young people's *sexual knowledge* was not explored in the in-depth interviews.

used to gain further insight into the parental aspects. That is, through different examples that the young people and their parents provided, it was possible to gain a clearer understanding of some aspect of their relationship investigated.

The same parental influence factors that were examined in the survey were explored in the in-depth interviews: verbal sexual communication, parental sexual attitudes, quality of relationship between young people and their parents and several factors of non-verbal sexual communication (including parental control, parental reactions to sexual scenes on TV, nudity, relationship between parents and affection). Each of these components was analysed for every young person interviewed and are summarised in the Appendix of Chapter 8.

In the following three sections, parental influence on sexual attitudes, timing of first sex and general contraceptive use are examined in turn. In each section, diagrams are included to illustrate and summarise the results of the analysis of the interviews regarding parental and other factors that were found to influence each sexuality outcome.

8.1 Parental Influence on Sexual Attitudes

The young men and women interviewed were asked to talk about their attitudes towards a variety of sex-related issues, including: young people having sex; gender differences in sexual behaviour; attitudes towards contraception in general and condom use in particular. The attitudes of the interviewees about these issues were complex, as they differed depending on: age, gender, partner, length of relationship, use of contraception, etc. Due to the complexity of sexual attitudes and the need to focus the analysis, it was decided that the analysis in this section would centre on one particular topic: *the interviewees' general sexual attitude towards young people having sex.*

Each of the interviewees were asked the general question: "What do you think of young people having sex?" It was interesting to note that most of the males and females interpreted and answered the question *for their own gender*. That is, young men explained what they thought of *males* having sex, whilst the

young women talked about *females*. Only when they were specifically asked to talk about the other gender, did they do that. The parents also followed the same pattern, as they tended to answer the question thinking about their particular son or daughter. Therefore to clarify, the analysis in this section focuses on the interviewees' attitudes towards young people, of the same gender as themselves, having sex. The findings are discussed for the young men first, then the young women, followed by a summary of the results for both genders.

8.1.1 Sexual Attitudes of Young Men

When the young men were asked to talk about their attitudes towards young people having sex, the majority of them (15/18) said they thought it was “normal” for males to have sex, that marriage was irrelevant, but that it was important to protect against risks. Many of them also argued that it is “important to have sex with someone you like”. M#6² communicated this group of attitudes clearly:

I: What do you think about young people having sex?

M#6: Normal!

I: What do you mean?

M#6: Normal! Normal, because I think that a person has to have sex when he feels good, if he feels ready, go ahead! Who am I to judge? I think that young people have to be prepared to have sex...you have to find the best way to have sex, practice safe sex, with someone you like, [because] that is my experience. My first time was with someone I did not like, someone I didn't know and it wasn't good. I think that people should look for a better experience. Has to be with someone you like and at the same time, protecting yourself!

I: What do you think about young people having sex before marriage?

M#6: I'm not against it...like I said before, when someone is willing, you cannot go against it...If people want to have sex before marriage, great, who am I to judge? As long as it is the way that I told you before, I think that sex has to be safe and with a person you like, I think that these are key!

(M#6, male age 18, first sex age 13)

In contrast, a minority of the males (3/18) believed young people should only have sex after marriage. Even though these three males were very

² Most of the quotes presented in this chapter are from the young people and they follow the following format: 'I' is short for *interviewer*, 'M' for male and 'F' for female - the number following 'M' and 'F' (like M#6 or F#13) denotes the specific male and female interviewed.

religious, they all felt strongly about the risks associated with having sex outside of a marital relationship, as communicated by M#9:

I: I'd like you to tell me more about what you think of young people having sex before marriage?
 M#9: ...I think it is really wrong because as I told you, there could be a person, you like her and then you have sex with her, and then without wanting, she gets pregnant, and then you say to her "you are not going to have this child, go and have an abortion" and then the girl doesn't want to have one and then what is the guy going to do? He is going to run away, right? They are not married, they have no commitment to each other, and so in that case I don't think it is right. For me, I don't think it is worth it [the risk], I think only after marriage.
 (M#9, male age 17, virgin)

As most of the young men's general sexual attitudes were quite similar to one another (except for the few who believed young men should only have sex after marriage), it was decided that parental influence would be explored by examining whether there was any evidence of *similarities or differences* between the males' attitudes and those of their parents. Therefore, the first step was to examine the sexual attitudes of their mothers and fathers towards young men having sex (see Table 8.1.13 in the Appendix of Chapter 8). In summary, most of the young men stated that their mothers (10/16) and fathers (9/11) were not against males having sex as long as they protected themselves and that marriage was irrelevant. A minority of mothers (6/16) and fathers (2/11) were reported to believe that young men should only have sex after marriage.

Table 8.1 shows those young men who held similar and different sexual attitudes to their parents. Most of the young men held similar attitudes to their mothers (13/16) and their fathers (11/12). These findings are not surprising because as discussed in the previous chapters, parents generally accept their sons having sex.

Table 8.1 Young Men* with Similar and Different Sexual attitudes to their Mothers' and Fathers' Attitudes

SIMILAR SEXUAL ATTITUDES TO THEIR MOTHERS	DIFFERENT SEXUAL ATTITUDES TO THEIR MOTHERS	SIMILAR SEXUAL ATTITUDES TO THEIR FATHERS	DIFFERENT SEXUAL ATTITUDES TO THEIR FATHERS
M#2	M#1	M#1	M#15
M#5	M#15	M#3	
M#6	M#18	M#5	
M#7		M#6	
M#8		M#7	
M#9		M#8	
M#10		M#11	
M#11		M#13	
M#12		M#14	
M#13		M#16	
M#14		M#18	
M#16			
M#17			

*Young men who did not have a relationship with their mothers or fathers (M#3, M#2, M#6, M#12), were unsure of their fathers' attitudes (M#9, M#10, M#17), or lacked data (M#4) were not included in the analysis.

Because most of the males' attitudes towards young men having sex were similar to both their mothers' and fathers' attitudes, it was difficult to see any clear patterns of parental influence. Nevertheless, there were reports from some of the young men that what their mothers *told* them, had influenced what they believed:

I: What do your parents think about young people having sex?
M#6: My mother is not against it. She thinks it is normal. But she says “if you have sex, be responsible”. I learnt this with my mother. If a person has sex, you can have a child, so be careful. My mother always says this.
(M#6, male age 18, first sex age 13)

Likewise, M#9 explained that he agreed with his mother's belief that young people should only have sex after marriage, based on what she *explained*:

I: Has your mother talked to you about sex?
M#9: Yes, I've asked her questions and she's always told me everything. Always when I had doubts, like about relationships or when I should first have sex with a girl, she used to say that everything had to occur at the right time. That I shouldn't do it in a rush, not just because I feel like it should I go and do it. No, everything has its time. And I also agree with her. She also says that it's right only to have sex after marriage. That I shouldn't let it happen before. After [marriage] you are with a person you really like, and it will be special, you will feel good that it's someone you love. Instead of [it happening] with someone you are with just because of sex, and then after you have sex, you leave and forget about it. I also don't think that's right.
(M#9, male age 17, virgin)

Therefore, even though a clear pattern of parental influence on young men's sexual attitudes was not evident, the discourses of some of the young men suggests that *through verbal sexual communication* with their parents, young men learn and adopt certain sexual attitudes. This general finding is presented in Diagram 8.1, where it is shown that young men are likely to have similar attitudes to their parents when they have talked to them about sex. This result is not surprising because through *verbal sexual communication*, parental sexual attitudes are communicated and so they are more likely to be learnt and adopted by young men if it takes place, than if it does not.

Diagram 8.1 also shows that young men are likely to have similar sexual attitudes to their parents, when their parents also accept males having sex - which was the case of most of the young men and parents interviewed. When parents are against young men having sex before marriage, they are less likely to agree with their son's attitudes, unless they have had an open communication with them, (as suggested by M#9 earlier) or if their sons were themselves religious. For example, M#8 did not talk much to his father or mother about sex when he was younger, but due to his experience of becoming religious at age 14, his sexual attitudes towards young men having sex changed and became similar to his parents:

I: What do you think of young people having sex?

M#8: Well, before I used to think something different. Like I told you yesterday, when I joined the church, I changed completely my ways of thinking, of behaving. Before I used to think it didn't matter, that young people could have sex whenever they wanted, whenever the moment allowed it, whenever it happened...

...

I: What do you think of young people having sex before marriage?

M#8: ...I agree with [having sex] after marriage, even though not many people do this. But I think it is essential because suddenly it happens and they don't use a condom and the girl gets pregnant, might have to get married, and everything changes. And so I think that [young people] should think and leave it for after marriage.

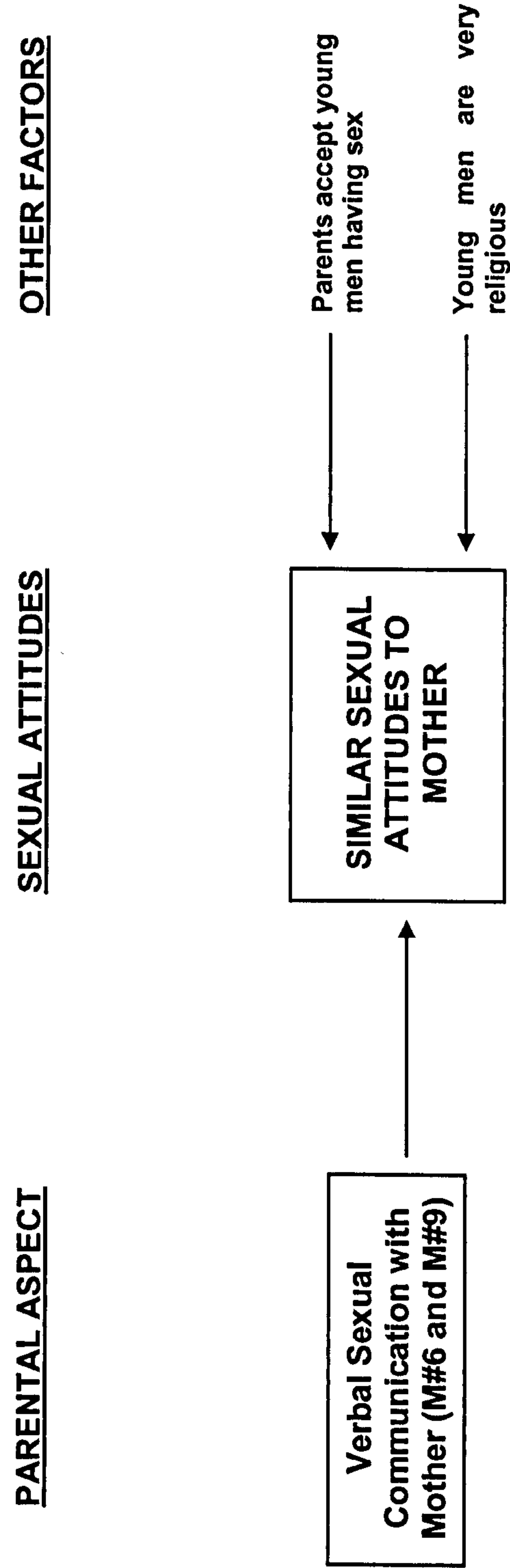
...

I: What does your father think about young people having sex?

M#8: I think that he thinks virginity is important, that a person shouldn't have multiple partners. [I know this] especially now that he is expressing his thoughts to me, because we are from the same world [both religious]. He is Evangelical and I'm also...So my father, he doesn't think it is right to have sex before marriage, my mother also.

(M#8, male age 16, first sex at age 14)

Diagram 8.1 Parental and Other Factors Related to the Sexual Attitudes of the Young Men Interviewed Being Similar to the Attitudes of their Mothers or Fathers



In general, there was some indication that *verbal sexual communication* with parents plays an important role in influencing young men's attitudes, but this was limited given the widespread similarity of views.

8.1.2 Sexual Attitudes of Young Women

The sexual attitudes of the young women interviewed about young people having sex were very similar to the young men. The majority of them (15/18) viewed prior marriage as irrelevant for sex but expressed concerns about sexual risks. They talked about the importance of protection and had other reservations, as explained by F#10:

I: What do you think about young people having sex?

F#10: Look, as long as it is with responsibility [with protection], as long as the person knows what he/she is doing, doesn't just do it for the sake of doing it, just for...as long as they are responsible, I think it is cool.

I: And how is this happening nowadays?

F#10: There are still a lot of people who are playing around with it [sex], without any responsibility, a lot of young girls pregnant, the fathers [young men] do not even want to know [about the pregnancy], they don't have any responsibility.

I: What do you think about having sex before marriage?

F#10: What I think? Look, I think it is normal, as long as it is with someone serious, as long as it is with someone that you really like. I think it is normal, as long as the person knows what they are doing.

(F#10, female age 17, first sex at age 17)

In contrast, a few of the young women (3/18) stated they believed young people should only have sex after marriage, as explained by F#15:

I: What do you think about young people having sex?

F#15: Um, I don't know, my opinion is that it is very wrong.

I: You think it is very wrong?

F#15: Yes

I: Why?

F#15: Because, it is like this: you have sex, then you get pregnant, then you lose your whole youth, because you know, having children is very bad.

...

I: What do you think about young people having sex before marriage?

F#15: I think it's very wrong.

I: Very wrong?

F#15: Yes, I think so...I think it is wrong. I think that it is important to marry a virgin. This thing of having sex before marriage makes no sense.

(F#15, female age 18, virgin)

Similar to the young men, parental influence on the young women's sexual attitudes was explored by examining the evidence of similarities and

differences between the attitudes of the females and of their parents. The first step was to examine the sexual attitudes of the mothers and fathers towards young women having sex (see Table 8.1.14 in the Appendix of Chapter 8). As many of the young women stated they did not know what their fathers thought about young people having sex, only their mothers' attitudes were analysed.

In summary, most of the young women (11/16) stated their mothers believed young women should only have sex after marriage. The other females (5/16) reported their mothers accepted young people having sex before marriage, as long as they were older and responsible, both in terms of protection and their choice of partner. When comparing the young women's attitudes with those of their mothers, it was found that 6 of them held similar attitudes to their mothers, whilst 10 of them were different, as shown in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2 Young Women* with Similar and Different Sexual Attitudes to their Mothers' Attitudes

SIMILAR SEXUAL ATTITUDES TO THEIR MOTHERS	DIFFERENT SEXUAL ATTITUDES TO THEIR MOTHERS
F#2	F#1
F#3	F#6
F#4	F#7
F#11	F#8
F#15	F#9
F#17	F#10
	F#12
	F#13
	F#14
	F#18

*F#5 was not included because of insufficient data and F#16 because she was unsure of her mother's attitudes.

A clear pattern was observed in the parental background of the young women that held similar and different sexual attitudes to their mothers and the results are summarised in Diagram 8.2. The general finding was that most of the young women's sexual attitudes were either similar or different to their mothers' attitudes depending on their experiences of *verbal sexual communication* with their mothers.

Before the findings are discussed further, it is important to explain how the females' experiences of verbal sexual communication with their mothers

were analysed and classified. In essence, the analysis identified that the young women's experiences divided into two groups (see Table 8.1.2 in Appendix of Chapter 8). First, a minority of the young women (5/18) experienced *good* verbal sexual communication with their mothers. *Good* verbal sexual communication means that these young women reported being able to talk openly about a variety of sexual topics with their mothers, ask questions, share own opinions, and who generally felt comfortable talking about sex. F#17 is a good example of the young women who experienced *good* verbal sexual communication:

I: What do you talk about with your mother?

F#17: Me and my mother, we talk about everything, about relationships...

I: Tell me more about these conversations with your mother, what sex-related topics do you talk about?

F#17: About sexual relations, she tells me not to worry about having sex too early because when the time comes I will have sex and so I shouldn't worry about it, that is what she says.

...

I: What do you ask your mother?

F#17: When I have doubts, like...I didn't know how the female condom was used, and so she got one, brought it to me and explained...

(F#17, female age 16, virgin)

In contrast, the majority of the young women's experience of verbal sexual communication with their mothers (13/18) was *poor*. These young women either reported not talking about sex at all with their mothers or only experienced some indirect comments or occasional warnings. F#9 had this experience:

I: Which topics related to sex have you talked about with your mother?

F#9: My mother? It is very rare to talk to her about relationships and this kind of thing. I don't talk, no, I don't.

I: Does your mother talk?

F#9: The only thing she says is for me to marry [as a] virgin. She always asks me "You've never had sex with C. [her boyfriend], right?" I say "No. Never, no. I've already told you, no"... Now to talk about sex, she doesn't. I think it is because she never talked much because in the past, people didn't talk about this and so for her, it is the same [as the past]. That is why we don't learn anything at home, nothing at home about sex, only on television.

(F#9, female age 18, first sex at age 17)

Now that it is clear what *good* and *poor* verbal sexual communication means, it is possible to understand Diagram 8.2. The Diagram in general shows that the young women who experienced *good* verbal sexual communication with

their mothers had *similar* sexual attitudes to them. In contrast, most of those that experienced *poor* verbal sexual communication had *different* sexual attitudes to their mothers. (The exceptions to this general pattern are shown in the Diagram, by the arrows above the links between *good* and *poor verbal sexual communication* on the left and the sexual attitudes on the right. Each of these will be examined later, after discussing the general pattern next).

Most of the young women who reported having *good* verbal sexual communication with their mothers (4/5 females) held *similar* attitudes to them and these varied from more 'liberal' attitudes to more 'conservative'. Interestingly, these females when asked about their mothers' attitudes, expressed that they were similar to their own attitudes by using words such as "same as me" and "also". This similarity is clearly illustrated by F#3, who expressed an uncommon concern about young women's bodies not being fully developed and thus unprepared for sex:

I: What do you think of young people having sex?

F#3: It depends on the age. If the person thinks that...it's up to the person. If they think that their body is ready, and they know the person [partner] well, they have to, have to... If they also like the person, they have to go ahead. But I also think it is wrong because you should also arrive at, have a certain age to start having sex. Because your body is not developed...you don't have the maturity yet, the line of thought that "yeah, this is good for me", and the [knowledge of the] methods of prevention too.

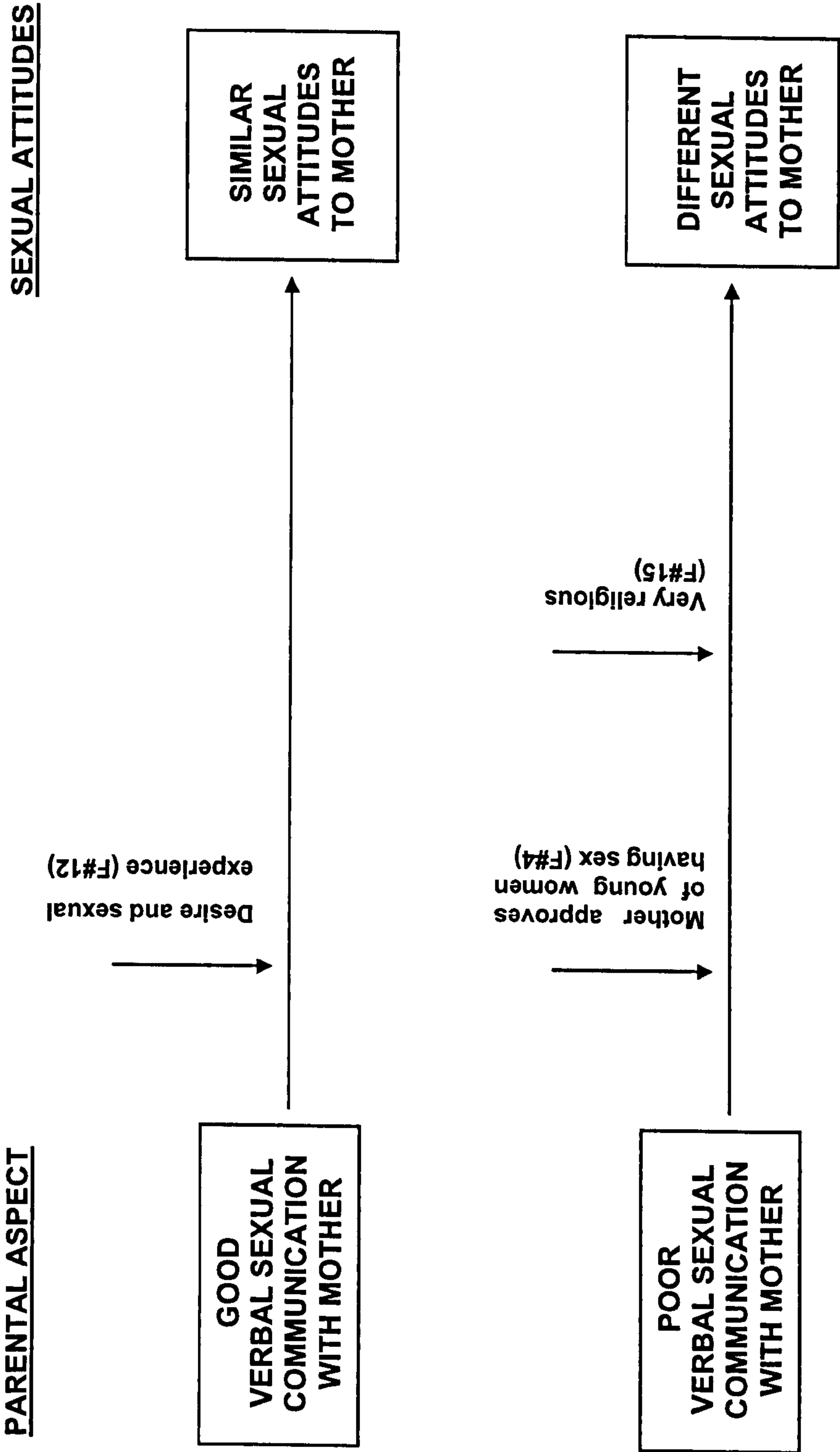
...

I: What do you mean [about the body not being developed]?

F#3: It's like this...During penetration, there are many girls that are not ready, their body is not ready. Many girls of 13 years are not ready, let me see...Some get pregnant, like a girl on my street, she is 14 and she is pregnant. She got together with a guy and now she's pregnant...She went to the hospital and her doctor said to her that her pregnancy is of high risk, because her uterus is not developed yet. [She has] a uterus of a child...

(F#3, female age 17, virgin)

Diagram 8.2 Parental and Other Factors Related to the Sexual Attitudes of the Young Women Interviewed Being Similar or Different to the Attitudes of their Mothers



When F#3 was asked what her mother thought of young people having sex, she confidently stated that her mother also thought it was wrong for young women to have sex too young because of their bodies not being fully developed:

I: What does your mother think about young people having sex?

F#3: My mother thinks it's wrong.

I: Why?

F#3: Because...she doesn't think it is the right time yet. That they're not at the right age, that their bodies are not developed yet. I also think that a girl age 15, 16 having sex, is wrong...She is against it too.

I: Does it have anything to do with marriage?

F#3: No, I think it has more to do with the body also, that it is not developed yet...it is not the right age...

(F#3, female age 17, virgin)

The similarity in their attitudes was confirmed by F#3's mother herself, who explained that females should wait to have sex until their uterus is mature.

Despite the general finding that young women who experienced *good* verbal sexual communication with their mothers held similar attitudes to them, there was one exception as depicted in Diagram 8.2. In essence, F#12's desire to have sex and her consequent sexual experience changed her attitudes, which previously were similar to her mothers':

I: What do you think of young people having sex?

F#12: As long as each person is mature, knows what they are doing, I think it is normal. And if they protect themselves with the most effective method, [it is] normal...For me it is normal, now it is normal. Before it [having sex] was very scary.

I: Tell me more about that.

F#12: Because before, the girls [friends] used to say...

I: Before when?

F#12: Before I...when I was a virgin. The girls used to say exactly this, that sex is normal. I used to say "it is not normal, for me it is not. I'm going to marry a virgin, I want to marry a virgin". I used to think that.

I: Why did you change your mind?

F#12: Because I tasted it [had sex] and I saw that it is not like I thought.

I: You changed your mind before you had sex or afterwards?

F#12: After. After I had sex that I changed my mind. Because I was waiting for marriage. I thought I was going to marry a virgin. But I already had the desire, I already knew what I wanted. So I thought, I will have sex when I get married, [but] I don't even know if I will marry. Will I have to wait until I marry? And what if I don't marry? I'm going to stay with this [hymen] my whole life? No.

(F#12, female age 18, first sex age 18)

F#12 explained that she wanted to marry as a virgin because her mother frequently said that her virginity was precious and that she should only “lose it” with her husband. Her explanation confirms that the verbal sexual communication that she had with her mother influenced her attitudes. When F#12’s mother was interviewed, she confirmed that she believed young people should only have sex after marriage. But what is interesting is that due to her daughter *talking* to her openly about her desire to have sex, she learned to accept her daughter’s decision:

Mother of F#12:...For me, [having sex] is right after marriage...But nowadays it is very difficult, it is rare.

I: How do you view the current situation then?

F#12: They [my views] are not how things are happening. My daughter told me “mother, any day now I’m going to do it [have sex]...I’m going to do it”. So I told her “Ok, you should then protect yourself”.

I: So what do you think of young people having sex in general then?

Mother of F#12: Look, I think that as long as they do it with safety...avoiding a pregnancy, a disease, I think that...for me, there is no problem, that is fine. If my other daughter too, when she becomes the same age [18, as F#12], and cannot [hold back] and she comes to me to say she will have sex, I will not be able to stop her. I will accept it the same way I did with my oldest, I’m not going to get angry and fight, or swear, I will just ask her to protect herself. “You want to do this [have sex]? So go prepared, go safely”. That is fine, today it is very difficult for a girl to marry as a virgin, it is very difficult, right? So I accept it.

(Mother of F#12)

The example of F#12 shows that with age and as young women mature, their sexual attitudes can change and differ from their mothers’, even if they experience *good* verbal sexual communication with them. Likewise, her experience reveals that when there is *good* sex talk, their mothers’ attitudes can also change. Therefore, *good* verbal sexual communication influences the sexual attitudes of *both* young women and their mothers. This finding is not surprising because when *good* verbal sexual communication takes place, there is an *exchange* of attitudes, and so the open conversation is likely to influence the attitudes of both people involved in the interaction – especially when the young person is older and contributes to the conversation with their own views.

At the bottom of Diagram 8.2, the link between *poor* verbal sexual communication with mother and young women having *different* sexual attitudes to them is shown. In summary, most of the young women interviewed who

experienced *poor* verbal sexual communication with their mothers reported that they accepted females having sex before marriage, whilst their mothers did not.

There were two exceptions to this general pattern as indicated in Diagram 8.2. First, F#4 was found to have similar attitudes to her mother, as they both said they accepted young women having sex, as long as they protected themselves from risks. This exception is similar to the case of most of the young men discussed earlier, as when parents are accepting of young people having sex, they are more likely to have similar attitudes to their son/daughter, who in most cases also accept youth sexual behaviour. Therefore, F#4 and her mother have similar attitudes, even though their verbal sexual communication is *poor*, probably because her mother is an exception to the other mothers, who believe their daughters should only have sex after marriage.

Second, F#15's experience was also an exception because despite having *poor* verbal sexual communication with her mother, she had similar attitudes to her mother. Both F#15 and her mother believed young people should only have sex after marriage. The best explanation for F#15's belief, which was only held by two of the other females interviewed, is because she was very religious. Therefore, as with the young men, religiosity can result in young women's attitudes being similar to their mothers'.

The general pattern that emerged between young women's *experience of verbal sexual communication* with their mothers and their attitudes being similar or different is understandable. Through *good* verbal sexual communication, young women have the opportunity to learn from their mothers and to understand *why* they have certain beliefs. As these young women have open conversations with their mothers, they not only hear what their mothers believe, but are also able to ask questions, which are then answered by their mothers, according to their own attitudes. In contrast, those who have *poor* verbal sexual communication with their mothers do not have conversations with them and so have fewer opportunities to learn from them and understand why their mothers believe what they do. In essence, their mothers are less likely to

influence their daughters' attitudes with their own attitudes as a result of not talking to them.

8.1.3 Summary of Parental Influence on Sexual Attitudes

For both the young men and women, the analysis of the in-depth interviews showed that *verbal sexual communication* with parents plays an important role in young people's sexual attitudes. This influence was indicated by the discourses of some of the young men and was a general pattern for the young women. Overall, the findings showed that through verbal sexual communication with parents, the sexual attitudes of both genders were influenced. The consistent pattern for the young women in particular indicates that mothers are more likely to be influential when they have *good* verbal sexual communication with their daughters. That is, when mothers engage in open conversations with their daughters about sex, in which both parties are able to ask questions and discuss their own opinions, their attitudes are more likely to be similar (either 'liberal' or 'conservative').

Despite this general finding, the experience of one of the female interviewees, showed that with age, other factors started to influence her attitudes, such as her desire to have sex. Her experience suggests that parental influence, through verbal sexual communication, may diminish as young people become older, become sexually mature and start to clarify their own attitudes. Nevertheless, it could be argued that her experience of *good* verbal sexual communication with her mother ensured that she had thought carefully about her beliefs concerning young women having sex, and may even have played a role in delaying her first intercourse experience.

8.2 Parental Influence on the Timing of First Sexual Intercourse

8.2.1 Timing of First Sexual Intercourse of Young Men

In order to analyse parental influence on the timing of first sexual intercourse of the young men interviewed, the males were first grouped based on their age at first intercourse. As Table 8.3 below shows, the young men who reported having their first intercourse at age 14 or below were grouped together and are referred to those that had ‘*earlier*’ first sex. Similarly, those males who had sex above age 14 or were virgins at the time of the interview are referred to those that had ‘*later*’ first sex. (Age 14 was chosen because it was the mean age at which the male survey respondents had their first intercourse).

Table 8.3 Young Men Interviewed who had ‘*Earlier*’ and ‘*Later*’ First Sexual Intercourse

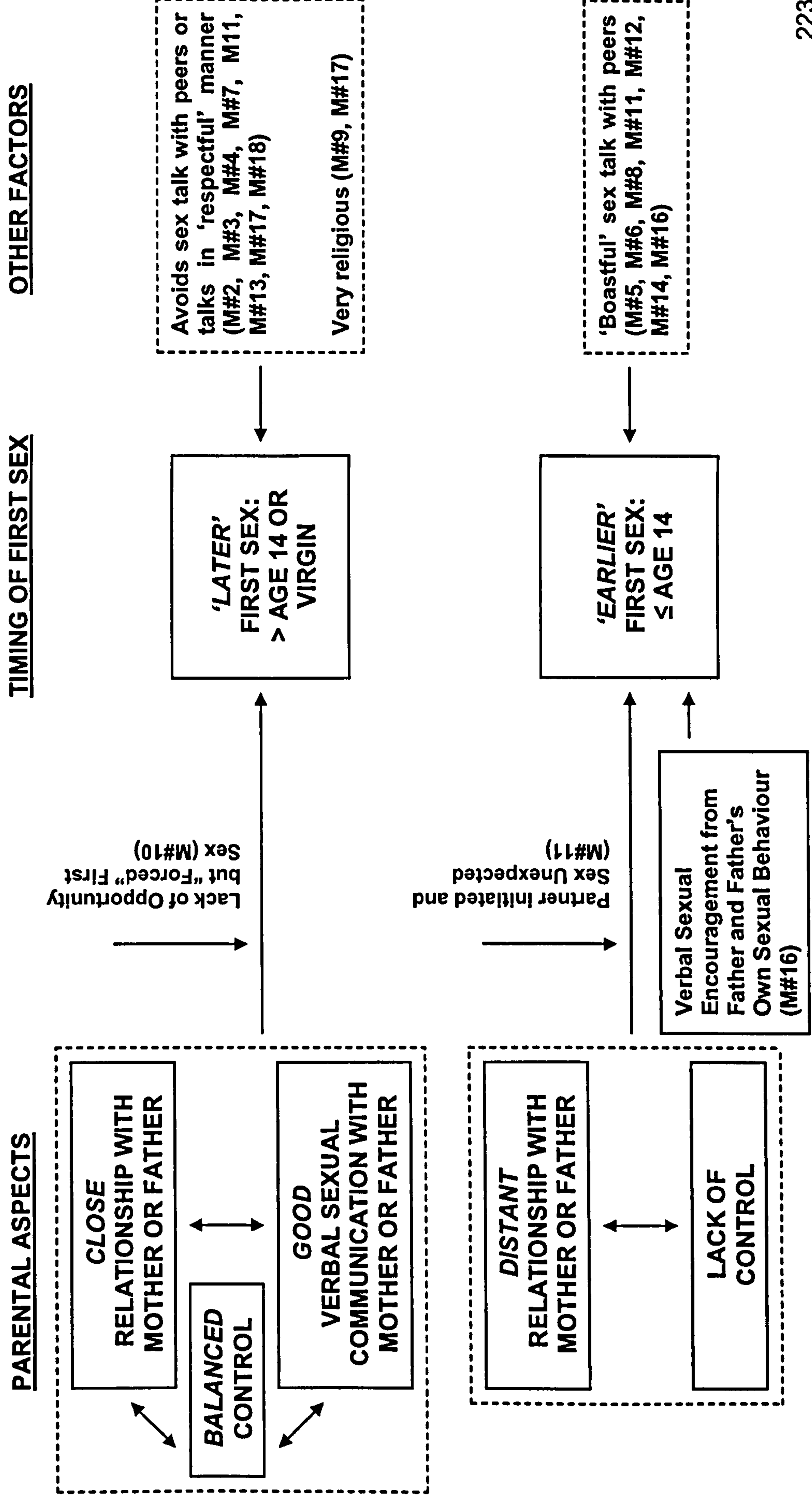
TIMING OF FIRST SEX*	
<i>Earlier Sex – ≤ Age 14</i>	<i>Later Sex – > Age 14 and Virgins</i>
M#5	M#2
M#6	M#3
M#8	M#4
M#11	M#7
M#12	M#9
M#14	M#10
M#15	M#13
M#16	M#17
	M#18

*M#1 was not included in the analysis because although he said he had sex at age 10/11, it seemed that he was lying because each time he was asked about his first intercourse, he told a different story and was unclear about his experience.

After the two groups of young men were determined, the parental background of the males was analysed for each of the parental influence factors. Patterns of parental influence emerged for the two groups, as well as additional factors that appeared to distinguish the two groups. The general results of this analysis are illustrated in Diagram 8.3. and the parental factors that were found to be important are shown on the left. Each of these are discussed next.

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Diagram 8.3 Parental and Other Factors Related to the Timing of First Sexual Intercourse of the Young Men Interviewed



Quality of Relationship

The *quality of relationship* between the young people and their parents was assessed by analysing several aspects of their relationship. They were both asked to talk about their relationship with each other in general in the past (when the adolescents were children) and present, and more specifically, about their communication, time spent together and arguments. Most of the young men and women remembered their childhood and relationship with their parents fondly, but also found it difficult to recall details of their relationship. As a result, the analysis of their quality of relationship was mainly based on the reports of their current relationship.

General communication, time together and arguments all appeared to be important when the young people and the parents were asked to talk about and assess their relationship. Nevertheless, the most important factor that characterised those that had a *close* relationship was *communication*. Most of the young people did not spend much time with their parents and reported disagreements, but those that stated talking to their parents frequently and exchanged information about their lives were generally the closest. It seems that having this 'quality time' together, is what makes young people feel most loved and close to their parents. From the accounts of the interviewees, it became clear that the young men could be grouped in two ways: those with a *close* relationship with one or both parents and those with a *distant* relationship (see Table 8.1.11 in the Appendix of Chapter 8).

M#3 is a good example of the young men who had a *close* relationship with his father. He was an unusual case because his mother left him and his siblings with his father for another man when he was 11. He had never seen her since. Nevertheless, his relationship with his single father is a classic example of a *close* relationship:

I: What do you think of the attention you received from your father since childhood until now.

M#3: From my father, gosh, full attention. When I used to arrive home...I'm good at pretending when I have a serious problem, I just keep quiet, but he, as soon as he sees me he already knows that something is happening. When I see him [sad] too, I ask him "dad, is something happening?" He then goes and tell me everything. Yes, [he] always gave me attention, always concerned about me, he's always concerned, has always asked if I was ok.

In the evening, when he saw that I was a bit down, he asked what was wrong. And I've always told him... Attention from him, [he scores] 10, really good.

I: Have you ever lacked attention from him?

M#3: From him? No, never lacked attention, no...

I: How does it compare to the attention you received when you were younger?

M#3: Ah, to tell you the truth he is the same still today. His way of being with me has not changed at all. He is always like this...He always talks [to me], tells me to tell him my problems, because sure, there are things that he will not be able to resolve, but in most cases, I'm always telling him things, not to lose touch with him. We have always talked about everything. The same way my father was when I was small, as long as I remember, he is the same today. Nothing has changed.

(M#3, male age 18, virgin)

In contrast to M#3's relationship with his father, is M#5's *distant* relationship with his mother:

I: Has your relationship with your parents changed since you were a child?

M#5: Yes. You know, when you are an only child, all of the attention is yours. When another one comes along, you are put on the side a bit. Our relationship has dispersed a little.

I: How was your relationship with your mother then?

M#5: It used to be very good. It changed a while back, because when you grow up, it becomes this distant thing [relationship]...you become embarrassed to go to her, give a kiss, a hug, anything like that...I have the desire to talk to her but I have reservations. I don't know why, I have open talks with my father, but not with her...I don't have that open relationship with her. It is easier for me to talk to my uncles, grandparents, than with her.

(M#5, male age 16, first sex age 13)

As shown in Diagram 8.3 the majority of the young men that had '*earlier*' sex (7/8) had a *distant* relationship with both of their parents. In contrast, all of the young men who had '*later*' sex, except for one (8/9) had a *close* relationship with either one or both parents. In most cases, they were either *close* to their mothers only, or to both parents. The only exception was M#3, the young man quoted above, who was brought up by his single father and had not been in contact with his mother for years. M#3's experience shows that despite not having a relationship with his mother since age 11, he was *close* to his father and he was a virgin at 18, at the time of his interviews. Therefore it seems that as long as young men are *close* to *one* parent, they are more likely to have sex '*later*'. Perhaps however, M#3's father is a special case because he fathered M#3 in a 'motherly' way, in the sense of being very communicative and talking about emotions with his son (Popenoe, 1996). Maybe if M#3's father had not 'replaced' his mother so well, the lack of his mother might have influenced him

differently – such as having ‘*earlier*’ sex, as most of the males with a *distant* relationship with their mothers did.

The finding that *quality of relationship* with parents generally occurred differently between the young men that had ‘*earlier*’ and ‘*later*’ sex is as expected (hypothesis 3). A possible explanation for this is that being *close* to one’s parent(s) is likely to help young men feel loved and important and to consequently have a higher self-esteem, compared to those who have a *distant* relationship. As mentioned in the previous chapter, higher self-esteem may result in young men being more concerned about sexual risks and more able to resist peer pressure to have sex early. Another possible explanation is that having a *distant* relationship with one’s parent may influence young men to have sex ‘*earlier*’ because of their need to be close to someone and receive affection and love. This was expressed by M#15, whose first sexual partner was a 44 year-old woman:

I: How was your first sexual intercourse experience?

M#15: In truth, I thought it was very bad. Because as soon as I had sex, I saw that the woman did not like me. When she went to tell me that she liked me, it was too late, as what I had felt for her, had finished...

...

I: Was it what you expected?

M#15: No. I expected to have more affection during sex, that she would give me more affection. But it was the opposite from what I had thought.

I: What do you mean by “more affection”?

M#15: More affection during sex, tell me she loved me, at least during sex. That she wasn’t going to leave me. That kind of thing.

(M#15, male age 16, first sex age 14)

Finally, as *communication* with parents was clearly related to the quality of relationship that young men had with their parent(s), it may also explain why it was related to their timing of first sex. Many of the young men who had a *close* relationship with their parent(s) described that their parent(s) frequently gave them advice about life (e.g. friendships, violence, drugs, etc), using examples of their own life struggles and of others. Therefore, it is likely that as young men have these conversations with their parent(s), they learn to consider the realities and difficulties of life and essentially, mature. Their greater maturity consequently helps them think carefully about life issues, including sexuality, which results in them considering the risks and so delaying sexual debut.

Parental Control

Young men's experience of *parental control* differed between the males that had 'earlier' and 'later' first sex. All of the males that had 'later' sex, except for one (M#10), experienced *balanced* parental control (see table 8.1.3 in the Appendix of Chapter 8). This *balanced* control was experienced by the majority of the young men (10/17) and consisted of those who reported that their parents did impose rules, monitored their outings, friendships and study, but that they also had some freedom and opportunities to make their own choices. This was communicated by M#7, when he talked specifically about the curfew imposed by his parents:

I: Are there any rules about going out?

M#7: Yes, like, if I'm going out somewhere close by, they always establish a time for me to return... If we [including siblings] go out at 7, we must be back by midnight. If we go out at 8, midnight we must be home...Always at midnight, independent of the time we go out.

...

I: What about your father, is he strict?

M#7: I think he is the same as my mother. There is always a right time for me to come back home, so that there will be no problems with him worrying about what it happening, why I'm late. He always gives the right time that is good for me and for him. [So] that he doesn't have to worry and that I can have fun, enjoy the party.

(M#7, male age 16, virgin)

In contrast to this *balanced* control, some of the young men interviewed (7/17) expressed a *lack* of parental control. These males generally reported that their parents were not strict, did not monitor them much and that they were very free to do what they wanted. This type of control was clearly communicated by M#14:

I: Does your mother set any rules?

M#14: No, my mother never was one for rules, no. Each one of us at home knows what is right and what is wrong. There was never a need to set rules, cause we always had 'our head in the right place'. We lived and learnt, so there was no need to set rules, no.

...

I: Do you tell your mother where you are going?

M#14: No, I don't tell her, because she knows where I go [the street], but I don't tell her...and I know how to take care of myself...But she doesn't usually say anything.

...

I: Does your mother allow you to go out with your friends at night?

M#14: Yes, my mother is not strict.

I: Do you go out with your friends at night?

M#14: Yes, most of the time we go to the bar, play snooker, drink beer. Sometimes we go after women. That's it, [I go out] frequently.

I: What time do you return home?

M#14: Sometimes when I go out, it is from midnight onwards. Sometimes I stay out all night.

(M#14, male age 17, first sex age 14)

Similar to M#14, most of the young men who had '*earlier*' sex (7/8) *lacked* parental control – the two exceptions are discussed later. Therefore in general, the experiences of the young men in terms of parental control differed between the males that had '*earlier*' and '*later*' sex. This result is not surprising because young men who experience a *lack* of parental control essentially have more opportunities to have sex (due to being out all night, for example), compared to those whose parents exert *balanced* control. Nevertheless, the influence of parental control on timing of first sex may be explained in two other ways.

First, as explained in the previous chapter when analysing the regression model for the timing of first sex of young women, a *lack* of parental control may result in young men taking risks, and therefore sex, less seriously. In essence, young men whose parents do not control them much are likely to believe that because their parents do not seem to be concerned about outside dangers, they need not be. Also, they have less experience of the consequences of their behaviours, such as from disobeying their parents, because their parents are lenient. Consequently, these young men may be more naïve about dangers in general and this translates in them having '*earlier*' sex. On the other hand, those who experience a *balanced* parental control learn that despite having some freedom, their parents have imposed boundaries for a reason: dangers exist, their actions have consequences and they have to be responsible. In essence, a *balanced* control helps young men mature and be more aware of risks, which results in them having '*later*' sex.

Verbal Sexual Communication

Diagram 8.3 shows that a pattern was found between young men's experience of verbal sexual communication with their parents and timing of first sex. Before the findings are discussed, it is important to explain how their experiences were analysed and classified (see table 8.1.1 in the Appendix of Chapter 8). First, as explained earlier for the young women, a minority of the young men

experienced *good* verbal sexual communication with their mothers (3/17) and fathers (3/16). *Good* verbal sexual communication means that these young men reported being able to talk openly about a variety of sexual topics with either their mother or father, ask questions, share own opinions and generally felt comfortable talking about sex. In contrast, the majority of the young men experienced *poor* verbal sexual communication with their mothers (9/17) and fathers (10/16). These young men either reported not talking about sex at all, or that indirect comments or warnings from their parents occurred only rarely.

The young men's experience of verbal sexual communication differed from that of the young women in the sense that there was a third group of experience: those who had *moderate* verbal sexual communication with their mothers (5/17) and fathers (3/16). Males who experienced *moderate* communication are those that stated they rarely engaged in *conversations* about sex, but that their parents *frequently* warned them about sexual risks (mainly pregnancy) and the need to use condoms. Their experience was similar to *poor* verbal sexual communication in the sense that they did not have two-way open dialogues with their parents about sex, but differed because the warnings from their parents were *frequent*, as opposed to *seldom*. Parents were, therefore, acknowledging the sexual activity of the young men even if not discussing it with them.

The link between verbal sexual communication and the timing of first sex shown in Diagram 8.3 is that all the young men who experienced *good* verbal sexual communication with either their mother or father were virgins (M#3, M#9, M#13, M#17) or had '*later*' sex (M#2, at age 16). The only exception seemed to be M#8, who reported having *good* verbal sexual communication with his father but had sexual intercourse at age 14. Nevertheless, after analysing M#8's experience of verbal sexual communication with his father, it became clear that his experience of *good* communication was a recent development. In the past, particularly when he first had sex, he had *poor* verbal sexual communication with both of his parents. The communication with his father had improved since they both became religious and their relationship improved. The case of M#8 shows the importance of parents having *good* verbal sexual communication with their sons from a young age, before they begin to have intercourse.

It is interesting to observe that young men's *experience* of verbal sexual communication (i.e. *good*, *moderate* or *poor*) seems to be important, not only the *content* of the communication. This is evidenced by the fact that the young men who experienced *good* communication had parents with varied sexual attitudes. For example, the mothers of M#9 and M#17 believed young men should only have sex after marriage whilst the mother of M#2 and the fathers of M#3 and M#5 did not think marriage was relevant but only use of contraception. Therefore, even though the parents of these young men held different attitudes and essentially communicated different beliefs during their conversations, they all had sex '*later*'.

A possible explanation for this pattern is that when young men are able to discuss sexual topics with their parents, they become less curious about sex and therefore wait longer to engage in it. Also, because they can talk openly with their parents, they may consequently talk less with their peers and thus face less peer pressure during conversations. In addition, these young men are perhaps more knowledgeable than those that have either *moderate* or *poor* communication and so are more aware of risks and take sex more seriously.

It must be mentioned that despite the general pattern observed between the experience of verbal sexual communication and timing of first sex, not all males who had sex '*later*' experienced *good* communication. Thus the general pattern shows that verbal sexual communication seems to be important, but it does not completely explain the findings.

In addition to young men's *experience* of verbal sexual communication, the *content* of the communication is also important, as evidenced by M#16. His case showed that despite not talking much about sex with his father (i.e. having *poor* verbal sexual communication), his father explicitly encouraged him verbally to be sexually active from a very young age and this motivated him to do so:

I: Has your father ever encouraged you [to be sexually active]?

M#16: Yes, many times.

I: For example?

M#16: [Father would say] "Look over there at that pretty girl, go there and *fick* with her." [He would ask] "Why do I have to *fick* with her?" [Father would reply] "Because she is pretty". So I would go there [to the girl], would try to make out with her and if I could, I

did. And he [father] would say “Gosh, take her home, do something (laugh). If you want to do something, take her home”.

...

I: How did you feel about that [father's encouragement]?

M#16: I would get excited, really excited (laugh). He would encourage me and I would do it.

(M#16, male age 17, first sex age 12)

In fact, M#16 was the only male who expressed such explicit encouragement from his father and he was the one who had sex the earliest (age 12) of all the young men interviewed. He even explained that he wanted to have sex earlier, before age 12, but that he was anxiously waiting for his first ejaculation. He did not want to have sex before he could ejaculate due to fear of his partner calling him a child. According to him, he was so curious to have sex, that he had his first sexual intercourse the next day after his first ejaculation with his cousin. Therefore, M#16's experience shows that the *content* of verbal sexual communication also influences the timing of first sex.

In addition, M#16's father's own sexual behaviour was extreme. He explained that as far as he could remember, his father always had many girlfriends and could never be faithful to any of them. He said that it was 'normal' for his father to have a different woman at their house every day and that he heard him having sex frequently with his different partners (M#16 lives alone with his father, his mother lives in a different town). M#16 suggested several times during the interviews that he had learnt how to behave towards women from his father. For example, when he talked about his own relationships, he explained that he too could not be faithful to one partner because he was like his father:

M#16:...I would like to, I think, have a family, bring up my children in a nice place to live. But I will always be *safado* [womaniser] just like my dad. There is no other way.

I: You will always be like that?

M#16:I always will, always.

I: Is it instinctive or you want to be like that?

M#16: No, it is not that I want to be, but I can't cope either [being faithful]. I am like him [father], I can't control myself either.

(M#16, male age 17, first sex age 12)

Therefore in general, M#16's experience shows that in addition to the *distant* relationship he has with his parents and the *lack* of parental control, he

was influenced to have 'earlier' sex by his father's explicit verbal encouragement and by modelling his sexual behaviour.

General Pattern of Parental Influence and Exceptions

So far, the general pattern for the young men interviewed is that most (7/8) of those who had 'earlier' sex had the same parental background: *distant* relationship with parent(s), *lack* of parental control, and *poor* or *moderate* verbal sexual communication. In contrast, the majority who had 'later' sex (5/9) tended to have a *close* relationship with their parent(s), experienced *balanced* parental control and *good* verbal sexual communication. Most of the other males (3/4) who had 'later' sex had *balanced* parental control and a *close* relationship but had either *poor* or *moderate* verbal sexual communication. The two exceptions to this general pattern (M#10 and M#11) will be discussed later and they are depicted in Diagram 8.3.

So in general, the three parental aspects (quality of relationship with parents, parental control and verbal sexual communication) were found to occur together in certain ways and this is illustrated in Diagram 8.3 by the arrows linking them on the left-hand side of the Diagram. To summarise, most of the young men who reported having a *close* quality of relationship with either one or both of their parents described that they experienced *balanced* parental control. Conversely, those who *lacked* parental control generally reported having a *distant* relationship with them. The link between a *balanced* parental control and a *close* quality of relationship is understandable because this type of control helps young people feel loved and guided in life but also respected because their parents recognise their need to have their own life and chances to make their own choices. On the other hand, when there is a *lack* of parental control, the young people are more likely to feel neglected by their parents and to frequently be away from them - e.g. due to spending more time with friends – thus distancing their relationship.

In terms of the link between verbal sexual communication and the other two parental factors, the experiences of the young men revealed that those who had *good* verbal sexual communication with their parent(s) also tended to have

a *close* relationship and experienced *balanced* parental control. Nevertheless, this pattern was not as strong as that between parental control and quality of relationship because not all young men who were *close* to their parents and experienced *balanced* parental control reported having *good* verbal sexual communication. Thus in general, a *close* relationship and *balanced* parental control seems to be important for open sex talk to take place, but does not guarantee it – probably because other factors, such as parental educational level, are also important for *good* verbal sexual communication to take place. This general pattern is as expected because being able to talk about sex openly is an intimate interaction and therefore understandably more likely to take place within a *close* relationship, which also tends to have *balanced* parental control.

Because of the link between the three parental aspects (parental control, quality of relationship with parents and verbal sexual communication) – i.e. because they usually occurred together in a certain way - it is difficult to determine if one of these aspects has a greater influence on the timing of first sex of males than others. It is likely that each one of them contributes in their own way. Nevertheless, the case of M#11 shows that even though young men might have a *close* relationship with their parents and experience *balanced* parental control, this does not prevent them from having ‘*earlier*’ sex. That is, young men’s parental background does not always result in a certain timing of first sex as other factors are important.

In the case of M#11, the best explanation for his ‘*earlier*’ debut – at age 13 – is that M#11’s first sex experience occurred unexpectedly, when his older cousin (age 17) initiated sex:

M#11...It happened one night, I had already kissed her, and we were both in the bedroom, at the farm [of their uncle], completely dark. She came to me and put my hand on her breasts and took off her shirt and I took off my clothes. And it just happened suddenly, because we were all [group of cousins] talking in the room, and then afterwards everyone went out, she closed the door and started to excite me, excite me and it happened.

...

I: Why did you have sex with her?

M#11: ...Because she showed that she was willing, like, to teach me. And so I think that it was because I wanted to try and learn with her, because I knew she was experienced That’s why I think it was.

(M#11, male age 17, first sex at age 13)

M#11 experience showed that sex can occur unexpectedly, especially when an older, sexually experienced person, initiates sex. What is interesting is that M#11 reported that even though he was able to show off to his friends after the experience, he regrets the way it happened because he did not like his cousin and felt worried that he did something wrong. It could be argued that if M#11 had *good* verbal sexual communication with his parents, he might have not had sex with his cousin when he did. This is because, he might have been less curious to learn from his cousin and more prepared to say 'no'. In addition, M#11 explained that before his cousin initiated sex, he had been talking about sex with her together with other cousins and that this conversation encouraged her to flirt with him and initiate sex. Thus, perhaps M#11 would not have talked about sex with his cousins if he had talked to his parents (influence of peer sex talk is discussed more later). In essence, M#11's experience highlights the importance of young men being knowledgeable about sex and prepared from a very young age. Through *good* verbal sexual communication, parents may help minimise the risks of such unexpected encounters.

The other case that was an exception to the general pattern was M#10, who had a *distant* relationship with his parents, *lacked* parental control, seldom talked about sex with them, but had his first sex '*later*', at age 15. It could be argued that age 15 is very close to 14 (the cut off point between '*earlier*' and '*later*' sex) and that it is unrealistic to draw the line there. Nevertheless, M#10's first sexual experience was unusual compared to the other young men interviewed, because his description of the event showed that he was desperate to have sex and seemed to 'force' sexual intercourse:

I: Tell me about your first sexual intercourse experience?

M#10: Gosh, to tell you the truth, I remember it until today. It was strange. I know that it started and I started to shake. I think she wasn't a virgin...All I know is that when penetration happened, I know that the girl went green, went blue, went yellow, I don't know, she just changed colour, you understand? I know that I was really nervous, that I was shaking.

I: Who was the girl?

M#10: She was a girl from my street, a friend of my sister.

I: How old was she?

M#10: She was 13.

I: How did it happen?

M#10: We were there [at my house] and we used to have the habit of playing house, something like that. Like, she was the father and I was the mother, and we used to play when my sister was home. And on this day, my sister wasn't home and we started to play. And so we started to play alone and it just happened.

I: What happened? Tell me how it happened.

M#10: We were playing, right, and I started to kiss her, and then I used to lift, she was wearing a skirt, right, so I lifted her skirt and she would pull it down. And so I kept kissing her...And then I remember that I didn't even remove her underwear, I didn't. I know that I just put it [her underwear] on the side and then I went and pushed [penetrated] and she became yellow, with no reaction. I was surprised, like, when I put it in. And then I started to penetrate and then, gosh, I remember until today... I know that it was, it didn't take even 5 minutes, I put it there and *up* [he ejaculated]. I know that I didn't use a condom. And so the way that she was, she continued and I got up...Afterwards I didn't even have the courage to look at her face...

(M#10, male age 18, first sex age 15)

Therefore, perhaps M#10 did not have sex '*earlier*' because there had not been the opportunity. When the occasion arose, he took advantage of it, even though his partner's reaction showed that she was not willing to have sex. It is important to state that by using M#10's experience as an example, it is not being suggested that young men who have his parental background and do not have '*earlier*' sex are likely to '*force*' sex when they get the chance to. His experience just highlights how desperate he was and that given his parental background, it is likely that he would have had '*earlier*' sex if he had had the opportunity before.

Non-parental Factors

On the right-hand side of Diagram 8.3, other factors that were found to influence the timing of first sexual intercourse of the young men interviewed are shown. First, the sex talk experienced by the young men who had '*later*' and '*earlier*' sex experienced differed between the two groups. Most of the males (8/9) who had '*later*' sex frequently reported that they either did not talk much about sex with their peers or only did so in a "respectful" manner, as explained by M#2:

I: Have you talked about sex with your friends?

M#2: Yes, because they are like me, they don't have many partners and they don't keep talking about their sexual relations with their girlfriends. But we talk about, when you discover something new about yourself, your body, that you didn't know before, then we talk to each other to find out if they also have discovered what you were telling them. And then you discover if they also have doubts, that is what we talk about. We don't do [as other males do] "Gosh man, that woman is so *gostosa* [tasty], I did this and this with her". No, that we don't talk about because that is a lack of respect with your partner, and so we don't talk about that.

I: How frequently do you talk about sex with your friends?

M#2: No it's rare, we only talk about sex when we are talking [in general] and then someone brings it up and then we start to talk. But it is rare for us to talk about sex.

(M#2, male age 18, first sex at age 16)

On the other hand, most of the males who had 'earlier' sex (7/8) said they frequently spoke and boasted to their peers about their personal sexual experiences, like M#14:

I: Have you talked about sex with your friends?

M#14: It's what we talk about the most. He tells me what happens with him [during sexual relations], I tell him what happens with me. What is going to happen, what we hope to do. That is what we talk about the most.

...

I: Tell me more about your conversations.

M#14: Well, it is really open, really scandalous. We talk about what really needs to be told without any embarrassment.

(M#14, male age 17, first sex at age 14)

The pattern found between sex talk with peers and timing of first sex is expected. Young men whose peers talk about their own experiences in a boastful manner are likely to experience peer pressure to have sex. As explained by the males in the focus groups and those interviewed, this pressure occurs in two main ways: First, their peers directly ask them to share experiences and tease those with a lack of experience. Second, they themselves want to contribute to the conversations and so feel pressured to gain sexual experience in order to do so. In contrast, those males that either do not talk much about sex or only do so in a 'respectful' manner are less aware of their peers' sexual behaviour and also experience less peer pressure.

It was interesting to observe that those young men that talked about sex frequently and in a boastful manner with their peers generally had the same parental background: *distant* relationship with their parent(s), *lack* of parental control and *poor/moderate* verbal sexual communication. (The only exception was M#15, who had this parental background but reported not talking about sex with his peers. The reason for his lack of sex talk however, was that he did not have friends and spent most of his time either alone or with his girlfriend). The question that this pattern raises is, does their parental background influence young men to make friends with those who have a similar background? A possible answer to this question is that because relationship with parents precedes friendships, then it is plausible that young men with similar parental backgrounds, and thus common experiences, are more likely to get along and become friends, than those with different backgrounds. If this is the case, then parental influence occurs not only through the different parental aspects

discussed earlier, but also through influencing the peer group that young men adopt.

Lastly, as shown in Diagram 8.3, religiosity was also found to be an important factor in young men having *'later'* sex. Both M#9 and M#17 explained that they would not have sex until they were married because of their religious beliefs.

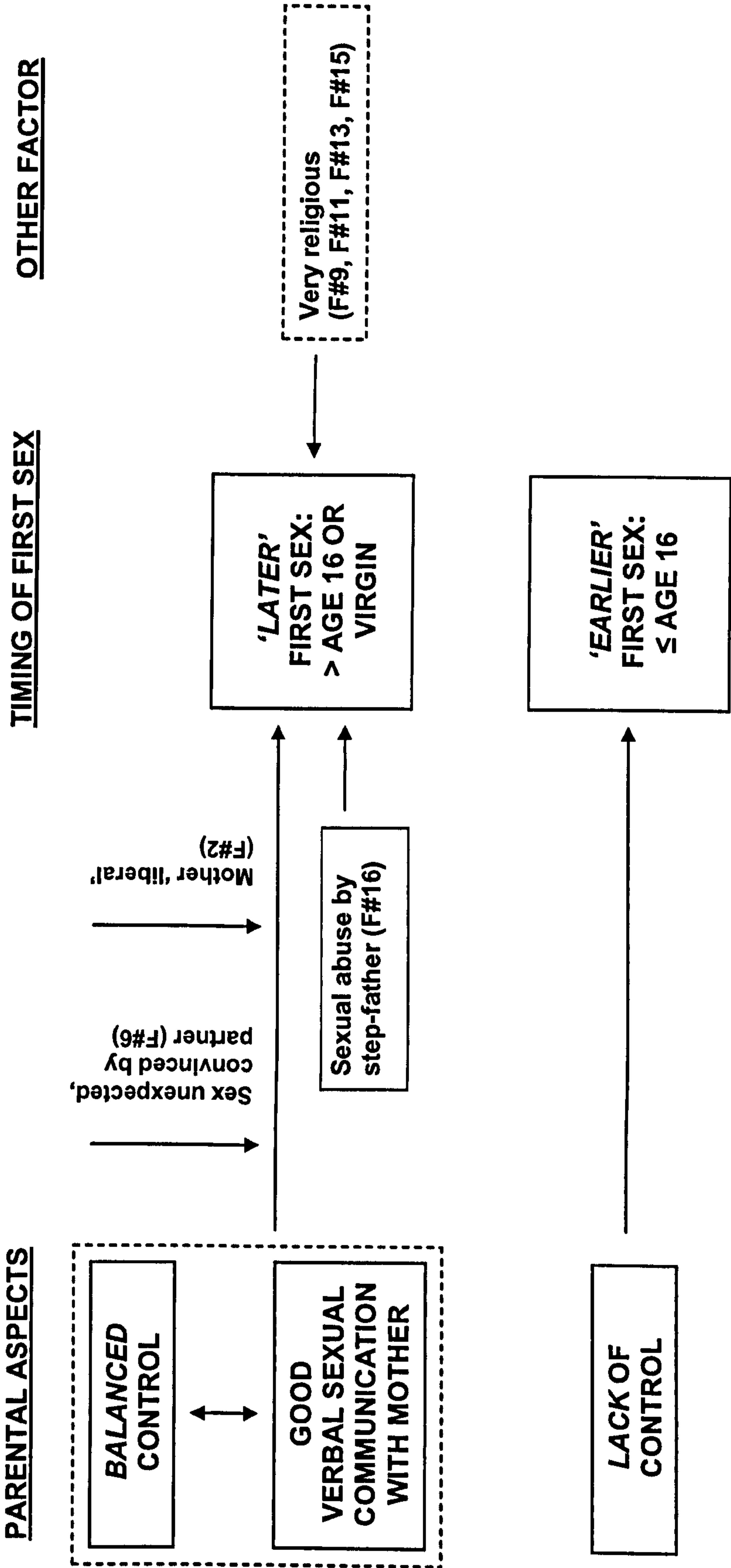
8.2.2 Timing of First Sexual Intercourse of Young Women

To explore parental influence on the timing of first sexual intercourse of young women, the females interviewed were divided into two groups: those who had sex at age 16 or below and those who had sex above age 16. The two groups are referred to respectively as those that had *'earlier'* and *'later'* sex, and they are shown in Table 8.4. (Age 16 was chosen because it was the mean age 15.8 at which the female survey respondents had their first intercourse). A summary of the patterns of parental influence that emerged from the analysis of the two groups are presented in Diagram 8.4 and each of the findings are discussed next.

Table 8.4 Young Women Interviewed who had *'Earlier'* and *'Later'* First Sexual Intercourse

TIMING OF FIRST SEX	
<i>'Earlier'</i> Sex ≤ Age 16	<i>'Later'</i> Sex > Age 16 and Virgins
F#1	F#3
F#2	F#4
F#5	F#7
F#6	F#9
F#8	F#10
F#14	F#11
F#18	F#12
	F#13
	F#15
	F#16
	F#17

Diagram 8.4 Parental and Other Factors Related to the Timing of First Sexual Intercourse of the Young Women Interviewed



Parental Control

There were three distinct types of parental control for the young women. Similar to the young men, most of the females experienced *balanced* control (10/18) and a few *lack* of parental control (4/18). However, in contrast to the males, a minority of the females (4/18) also experienced *excessive* parental control. In these cases, the females reported that they were rarely allowed out of their home, except to school or accompanied by a family member. F#1 was one of these females:

I: Are your parents strict?

F#1: Yes,...I think my mother is very strict.

I: Why do you say that?

F#1: I think they are mainly strict in relation to boyfriends, my freedom. I have to stay mostly at home, can't have too many friends. I can only date someone they know, I have to take him [boyfriend] to talk to them, they are strict in that way.

I: So they establish rules at home regarding dating, friendships?

F#1: Yes, for friendships too. That's why I think I'm like this, I only like to stay at home. Since I was young, I was brought up to stay at home.

(F#1, female age 18, first sex at age 13)

The fact that only the young women reported *excessive* parental control whilst none of the young men did is not surprising, as the focus groups and survey showed that females generally experience more parental control than males (see chapter 6).

Diagram 8.4 shows a pattern between the type of parental control that the young women experienced and the timing of their first sex. Most of the young women who experienced *balanced* parental control (9/10) had '*later*' sex. In contrast, all of the young women (4/4) who *lacked* control had '*earlier*' sex. This pattern is similar to that found for the males and some possible explanations were given earlier. The only exception to the general pattern was F#6, who experienced *balanced* parental control but had her first sex at age 14. Her explanation of how her first sexual intercourse occurred sheds light into why she had sex when she did:

F#6: ...We were at his house. Sometimes he would talk about that [that he wanted to have sex] and I would say "no, no". And it was the same way that day. We were alone there and then he started [to say he wanted to have sex] and I said: "No, because I don't want to and

so on” and then because he insisted so much, it ended up happening. But if he hadn’t insisted, it would not have happened.

(F#6, female age 17, first sex at age 14)

In essence, despite her *balanced* parental control, F#6’s boyfriend took advantage that they were alone and convinced her to have sex. It was not planned and F#6 later said that she did not like the experience and felt very apprehensive during sex that someone would walk in and her mother would find out. F#6’s case shows that *balanced* parental control does not prevent young women from having ‘*earlier*’ sex and specifically, from being convinced into having sex, especially at a young age. Perhaps if F#6 had had good verbal sexual communication with her parents, she would have been able to be more assertive to say ‘*no*’ to sex (the link found between verbal sexual communication and females’ timing of first sex is discussed later in this section).

In terms of *excessive* control, the timing of the first sex of the females who experienced this type of control (4/18) was mixed. F#1 and F#5 had ‘*earlier*’ sex, whilst F#7 and F#10 had ‘*later*’ sex. A likely explanation for their different experiences is that *excessive* control influences women differently, depending on their personalities and circumstances. F#1 and F#5 both reported missing school to have sex with their boyfriends because it was the only opportunity they had. Thus perhaps *excessive* control influences those who are more ‘*daring*’ to seek out opportunities to go against their parents’ control. In contrast, F#7 and F#10 were different because they stated they feared their parents and tried to be obedient. Perhaps these two females have more ‘*passive*’ personalities compared to the other two girls.

Nevertheless, what was interesting to note from the discourses of all of the four young women who experienced *excessive* control, is that they lacked assertiveness and seemed very naïve. This was evident by the way they talked about their attitudes and behaviour. In fact, the three who had had sex, reported that they were unexpectedly led by their partners to have sex and they did not resist:

F#1: The house was empty and we were there and it happened. Afterwards he asked if I was angry at him, because it happened suddenly. But I wasn’t angry because I also didn’t react. We were kissing and had sex...

...

I: Did you know it was going to happen?

F#1: I didn't decide (laugh). The truth is that I didn't even choose or think that today I want to [have sex], it is time. I didn't think, no. It just happened, I didn't expect it.

(F#1, female age 18, first sex at age 13)

Similarly, though F#10 had '*later*' sex, she too was easily led to have sex by her boyfriend, even though she was uncomfortable about the timing:

I: How did it happen [first sex]?

F#10: He went to my house and sat on the sofa. I remember that in the beginning we were playing games [with each other], he sat at one end of the sofa and me at the other. We were watching TV and then we started getting closer to one another, then we started kissing and things started to get really hot and I saw that it [sexual intercourse] was going to happen. And I wasn't even a little comfortable because I had my period. And so I told him [about my period] and he said that it didn't matter and then we had sex.

(F#10, female age 17, first sex age 17)

Therefore, it is possible that the influence of *excessive* control on the timing of first sex of females may depend on each individuals' personality, as some seem more likely to try to 'break' their parents' rules than others. Nevertheless, *excessive* control seems to contribute to females being less assertive and essentially more easily led by their partners. This is plausible because when a young person grows up with *excessive* parental control, they essentially have fewer chances to make decisions and choices for themselves, and to consequently develop their own opinions and assertiveness. In general, the 'mixed' influence of *excessive* control compared to *lack* of control found in this study essentially supports previous research which has found that *lack* of control is 'worse' than *excessive* control and that *balanced* control is best (Miller *et al.*, 1986).

Verbal Sexual Communication

Diagram 8.4 shows that similar to the young men, most of the young women who experienced *good* verbal sexual communication with their mothers, had '*later*' sex – 4/5 of these females were virgins (unfortunately, it was not possible to examine the influence of communication *with fathers* as all the young women interviewed experienced *poor* communication with them). Possible explanations for this link were given earlier for the young men. There was one exception however, to the general pattern: F#2, who had talked openly about sex with her

mother but initiated sex at 13. Nevertheless, it is understandable why F#2 was an exception. Not only did she *lack* parental control, but her mother was uniquely 'liberal' and accepting of her sexual behaviour. As explained by F#2's mother herself, she was not surprised when her 13 year-old daughter told her she had had sex:

Mother of F#2:...When her time [first sex] happened, I thought it already had happened (laugh).

I: You thought it already had happened?

Mother of F#2: Yes, I thought it already had happened. Because she used to go out a lot with her friends and sometimes she went out at 7 at night and returned at 8 in the morning. Sometimes she would return [home] at 8 in the morning drunk...so young, I was so concerned. She would ask to go out and I wouldn't let her, [she] asked her father and he allowed her. Her father has always been [lenient], everything she asks he has to do. And so when it happened [first sex], I thought it had happened long before.

(Mother of F#2)

In fact, F#2 mentioned that before she had sex, her mother had asked her several times if it had happened and did not believe her when she said she had a virgin. Therefore, from the *content* of the *good* verbal sexual communication that they had with each other, F#2 learnt that her mother not only accepted her having '*earlier*' sex, but even expected it to happen.

Sexual Abuse

Diagram 8.4 shows that in addition to parental control and verbal sexual communication, the timing of first sex of young women can also be influenced by the experience of sexual abuse. This was explained by F#16, who had been sexually abused by her step-father as a child:

F#16...I was so traumatised (by the abuse). I was scared to go to school, I kept crying at school. I only started dating when I was 17, that's when I had my first boyfriend. I was scared of kissing and being touched...[I didn't date] so that nothing would happen. I used to see all of my friends dating and I was already 17 and I had never dated anyone, had never had a first kiss, I was scared...

(F#16, female age 18, first sex age 18)

Thus in essence, F#16's experience of sexual abuse had caused her to avoid romantic relationships, which contributed to her '*later*' first intercourse.

Non-parental Factor

Similar to the young men, Diagram 8.4 shows that the females' religiosity was found to be an important factor in some of the young women's explanations for remaining virgins.

8.2.3 Summary of Parental Influence on the Timing of First Sexual Intercourse

Similar patterns of parental influence on the timing of first sexual intercourse of the young men and women interviewed were found for both genders. First, the majority of the young men and women who experienced *good* verbal sexual communication with either their mother or father had sex '*later*' or were virgins. The *content* of the communication was found to influence '*earlier*' sex when there was explicit encouragement or acceptance of early sexual debut. This confirms the importance of the *content* of verbal sexual communication communicating parental sexual attitudes and consequently influencing young people's timing of first sex.

Second, differences in parental control between the males and females that had '*earlier*' and '*later*' sex were clearly found. Most of the young men and women who *lacked* parental control had '*earlier*' sex whilst those that experienced *balanced* control had '*later*' sex. Third, for the young men only, *quality of relationship* with both parents was found to differ between those that had '*earlier*' and '*later*' sex. The majority of the young men that had '*earlier*' sex had a *distant* relationship with their parents whilst those that had '*later*' sex were *close* to their mothers or both parents.

In addition to the parental influence factors studied, the in-depth interviews showed that other parent-related experiences influenced the timing of first sex of two of the interviewees. First, the experience of one of the males showed that his '*earlier*' sexual debut was also influenced by his father's own explicit sexual behaviour, of which he modelled. Second, one of the females' experience of sexual abuse by her step-father contributed to her '*later*' sexual debut. Therefore, even though these two influences were not deliberately

investigated, they show other parental factors can influence young people’s timing of first sex.

8.3 Parental Influence on General Contraceptive Use

8.3.1 General Condom Use of Young Men

In this section, the analysis and results regarding parental and other influences on young men’s general condom use are presented. *General condom use* was chosen for two reasons: first, all of the young men interviewed who were sexually active reported that they did not use a condom at first intercourse and second, condoms were the only method used by most of the males after first sex. Table 8.5 shows the sexually active young men interviewed who reported using condoms *consistently* (always), *not consistently* (sometimes) and *never*.

Table 8.5 Young Men Interviewed who Used Condoms Consistently, Not Consistently and Never

GENERAL CONDOM USE*		
Consistent – Always	Not Consistent – Sometimes	Never
M#4	M#2	M#15
M#11	M#5	
M#12	M#6	
M#14	M#10**	
	M#16	

*M#1 and M#8 were excluded because they reported having had sexual intercourse only once, and both did not use condoms.
**M#10 started to use condoms more consistently in recent years due to fear of AIDS in his neighbourhood.

As depicted in Table 8.5, four of the ten sexually active young men that had sex more than once reported *consistently* using a condom after their first intercourse, as communicated by M#11:

I: Have you ever used a condom?
M#11: After the first time, every time I had sex was with a condom.
I: What is it like to use a condom?
M#11: For me it does not remove the pleasure, because you already know that [the condom] is practically part of you. For you to take care of yourself, you have to use [a condom]. I don’t think the sensation changes, it is normal to be using one, knowing that you are practising safe sex. I think it is even good to use a condom. I think it is essential, fundamental to use a condom during sex, because you don’t want to get someone pregnant, not a pregnancy nor a disease. I think for me it is good.

I: After your first time, you used a condom every time?

M#11: Every.

(M#11, young man age 17, first sex age 13)

In contrast, half of the sexually active young men (5/10) reported that their condom use was *not consistent*, as explained by M#16:

I: How many times have you used a condom?

M#16: Oh, I think about half. Half of them were with a condom, at the most, half.

...

I: Why aren't condoms used?

M#16: Reason why I don't use...because sometimes I don't have one. But every time there is one, I use it. Now sometimes you are there [with a partner] and you didn't have time to buy or you couldn't buy one, you didn't have money. Or you think it is better without or you think it [sex] is not going to happen today and then *pum*, it happens. And you don't have where to go [to get a condom] and so it happens without one.

(M#16, male age 17, first sex age 12)

Lastly, Table 8.5 shows that one of the young men interviewed, M#15, said he had never used a condom during sex. His explanation shows his lack of sexual and contraceptive knowledge and possible partner influence:

I: In general when you have sex, is any method of contraception used?

M#15: No. Every time she [his second and current partner] uses a condom, her body does not accept condoms, or any other method. Condoms burst inside of her, leaves a piece and she has to go to the doctor to get it removed. And the pill, she doesn't use it because if she did, it wouldn't make a difference [she can't get pregnant].

I: Have you ever used a condom?

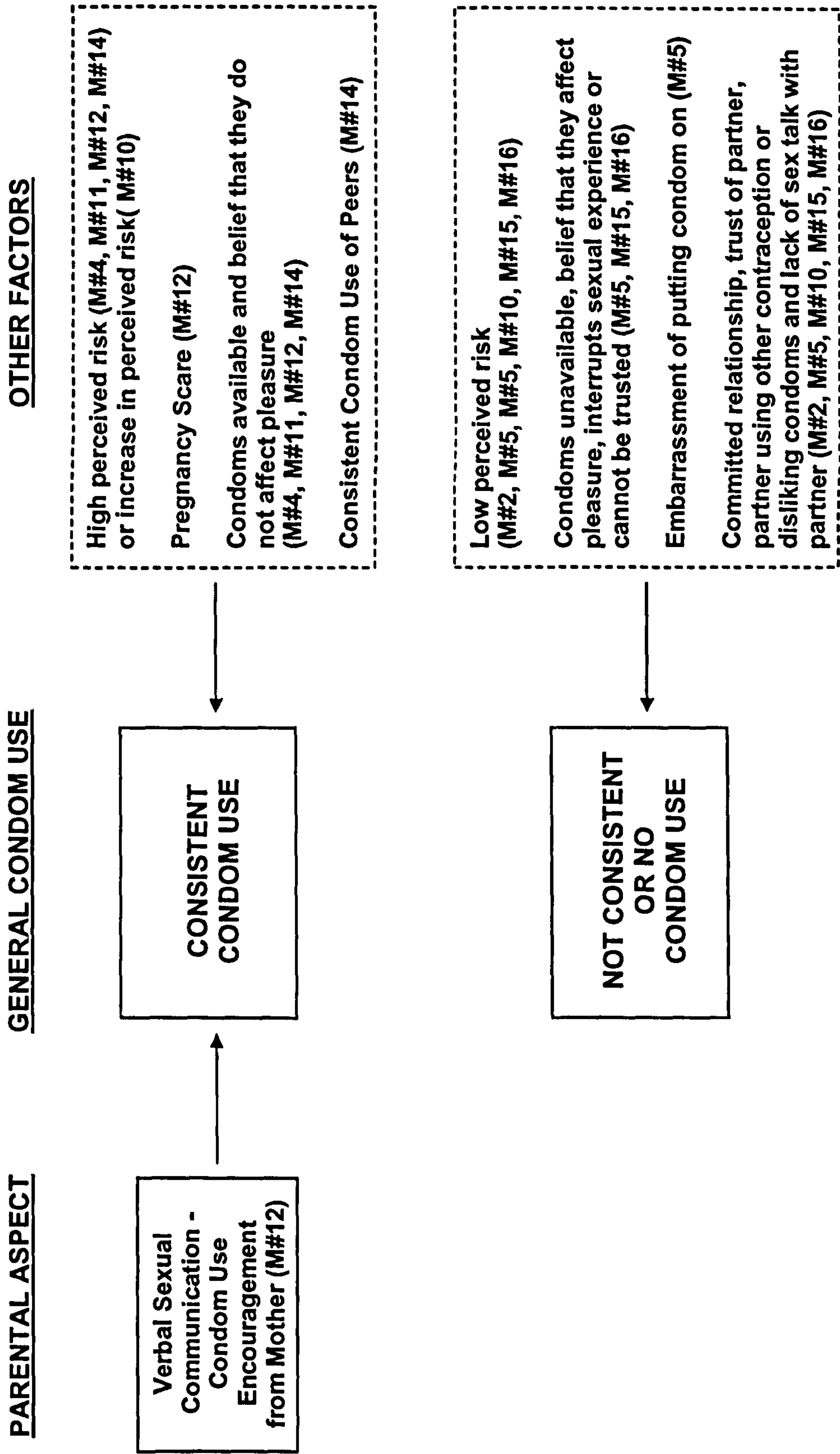
M#15: No.

I: Why?

M#15: I've just put one on and removed it, just to see what it was like...I think I should only use a condom if I didn't trust the person and if she could get pregnant. None of the two [partners that I've had] can get pregnant.

(M#15, male age 16, first sex age 14)

Diagram 8.5 Parental and Other Factors Related to General Condom Use of the Young Men Interviewed



Patterns of parental influence were explored for young men's general condom use. The summary of the findings are presented in Diagram 8.5 and show that there was no parental aspect that emerged as a clear influence for all males. Nevertheless, the explanation for *consistent* condom use by one of the males, M#12, suggests that *verbal sexual communication with mother* does play a role:

I: When did you not use a condom?

M#12: Only the first time.

I: Why did you use the other times?

M#12: Because I used to hear, my mother always says [for me to use a condom]. And then something happened that a girl fooled me [that she was pregnant]...I used a condom, and then the next day, no, not the next day, about a week later, she asked if I have removed [the condom], if it hadn't broken. She fooled me...and I became involved in the confusion that she was pregnant, and so I thought it would be better, from then onwards, to use [a condom].

(M#12, male age 17, first sex age 14)

Thus according to M#12, his mother's encouragement and reminder for him to use condoms influenced his *consistent* condom use. This is not surprising because frequent reminders about something shows it is important and can mean it is less likely to be forgotten. M#12's additional reason for using condoms consistently however, a 'pregnancy scare', shows that his condom use was also influenced by other factors - this is discussed further later.

Despite M#12 stating his mother as one of the reasons for his consistent condom use, the experience of other males whose mothers also frequently told them to use condoms shows that this communication does *not* ensure such behaviour. This was the experience of M#6, for example, but his condom use was *not consistent*. In fact, his case is interesting because he was the only male that reported that his mother not only reminded him frequently to use condoms but also bought him condoms and ensured that he always had a supply. Despite this, he confessed to his mother about his contraceptive behaviour:

M#6:...There was one time that she said [his mother]...“Are you using condoms?” I said: “Look mother, I’m going to be honest with you. Sometimes I do it without a condom, sometimes I’m doing it with a condom.” She said: “You have to use a condom, because you don’t work and I’m not going to support your child, because I cannot support your child, do you understand? And you are too young to have a child, you have to study, you are not ready to have a child”...

(M#6, male age 18, first sex age 13)

In general, though M#12 suggested that his mother's verbal sexual communication about condom use influenced his *consistent* behaviour, the experience of other males shows that it does not guarantee it, even if a mother ensures that her son has condoms to use (as M#6).

Non-parental Factors

The quotes presented earlier of the young men talking about their condom use, provided several explanations for their behaviour that were not related to parents. These are depicted in Diagram 8.5 and some are summarised below. First, the young men who used condoms *consistently* compared to those who were *not consistent* or *never* used one during intercourse differed in the way they perceived risk. The *consistent* users all talked about their concern of getting a female pregnant and of acquiring an STI – though the latter risk was not as concerning for them as the former. In contrast, the other males did not seem to take the risks as seriously. In fact, it was interesting to hear from M#10 that because he had recently discovered that there were HIV-positive people living in his neighbourhood, he had become afraid of being infected (increased perception of risk) and had started to use condoms consistently.

Second, related to perception of risk is the experience of a 'pregnancy scare', explained by M#12 earlier, that reinforced his belief that he should always use condoms. Nevertheless, 'pregnancy scare' does not always result in young men using condoms consistently because even though M#16 had this experience, which he also found traumatising, his condom use did not become consistent.

Third, from the young men's discourse it was clear that condom use was clearly influenced by condoms themselves, such as their availability and young men's attitudes towards them. For example, all of the young men who used condoms *consistently* argued that condoms do not affect their pleasure, which was commonly believed by the other males. In addition, it was interesting to hear from M#6 that one of the reasons that he did not always use condoms was because he sometimes felt embarrassed putting a condom on in front of his partner.

Partner issues were found to be extremely important in explaining young men's condom use. First, *who* their partner was influenced condom use. In general, if young men were in a *committed* relationship, they were less likely to use condoms because they were believed to be a method that is mainly used when one does not trust or know their partner well. Also, when young men were in a serious relationship, their partner would often use another method of contraception to prevent pregnancy, thus removing the need of condoms. However, this does not mean that condoms were always used in less stable relationships. The experiences of the young men showed that using a condom during sex with someone they were not committed to depended on their perception of risk, condom issues (availability and attitudes towards them) and maturity. For example, if they were concerned about getting an STI or about a pregnancy occurring, they were more likely to use a condom. But if they were not concerned about either risks and believed that pregnancy was the females' responsibility (such as M#16) then they were less likely to use one.

In addition, condom use also depends on the partners' own attitudes towards condoms. As shown in an earlier quote, M#15 reported that his partner did not like to use condoms and believed that it would break inside of her and leave pieces that could only be removed by a doctor. Another partner factor that was found to be important in young men's condom use was whether the couple had talked about using a condom or not before having sex. In particular, if the female had not asked for a condom to be used and the male himself was not concerned about it, it would not happen.

Lastly, it was reported by M#14 that not only did he use condoms consistently, but so did all of his close peers. He said that he and his peers frequently reminded each other to have condoms with them at all times and to use them at every intercourse.

In summary, explanations for the condom use behaviour of the young men interviewed was found to be multi-factorial and complex. Parents may influence their sons by talking to them about condom use frequently, but this is not sufficient as many other factors come in to play and can vary for each

individual, depending on their partner and other issues present at the time of intercourse.

8.3.2 General Contraceptive Use of Young Women

In contrast to the young men, the analysis in this section focuses on *general contraceptive use*, as opposed to *general condom use*. This was decided because first, only a few of the sexually active young women interviewed (3/11) reported using condoms consistently and second, even though condoms in particular had not been used, two additional females had used other contraceptive methods (pill and monthly injection) consistently since their first sex. Therefore, the analysis and results presented in this section explores parental and other influences on young women’s *general contraceptive use*. Table 8.6 shows the sexually active young women interviewed whose general contraceptive use was *consistent* (always condoms or another method) and *not consistent* (rarely used condoms and no other method).

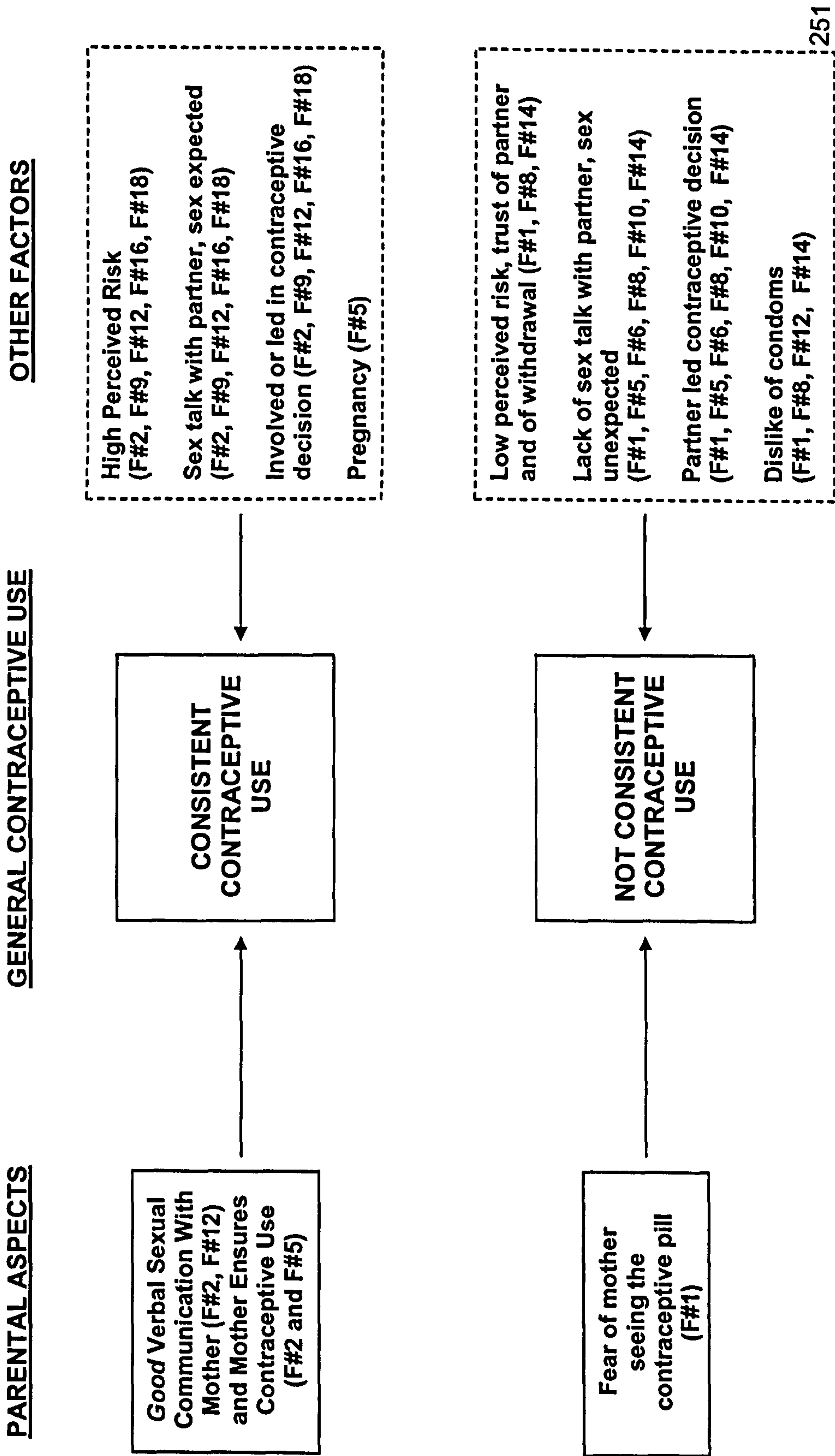
Table 8.6 Young Women Interviewed whose General Contraceptive Use was Consistent and Not Consistent

GENERAL CONTRACEPTIVE USE*	
Consistent – Always condoms or another method	Not Consistent – Rarely used condoms and no other method
F#2	F#1
F#5*	F#6
F#9	F#8
F#12	F#10
F#16	F#14
F#18	

*F#5 began to take the pill consistently after she had a child.

The parental background of these young women was analysed to see if there was any evidence of them having influenced their contraceptive behaviour. The findings are depicted in Diagram 8.6 as well as the other factors which were found to explain the females’ contraceptive use.

Diagram 8.6 Parental and Other Factors Related to General Contraceptive Use of the Young Women Interviewed



In Diagram 8.6, it is shown that the two young women who experienced good verbal sexual communication with their mothers (F#2 and F#12) had used contraception *consistently*. A likely explanation for this result is that because these young women could talk openly with their mothers about sex, they were not only aware of the need for contraception but they were also able to tell their mothers that they were sexually active, which meant that their mothers could encourage them to use contraception. In addition, as F#12 clearly reported, her communication with her mother was important because it made it easier for her to take the pill:

I: How did you feel about telling her?

F#12: Relief

I: Did you?

F#12: Yes, I was relieved. Gosh, after I told her I was so relieved. Because I couldn't stand [her not knowing] because every day at night I would look at my watch. My mother was already suspecting, because every day at the same time - because I take it every day at the same time - and every day I would ask her "mother, what time is it?" And she would say "Nine twenty-five". And I would go to my room, would get something and would drink water. And then my mother was already suspecting, but she didn't know what it was. And then she saw the stuff [pill] and discovered what I was taking every day at night.

(F#12, female age 18, first sex age 18)

In fact, two of the females (F#1 and F#9) stated that taking the contraceptive pill was not an option for them because they feared their mothers seeing it and discovering that they are sexually active:

I: Have you thought about using another method [from condoms]?

F#1: No. I think it is more difficult, more complicated. For example, to use the pill, at home I would have to [be careful because], suddenly my mother could find out..

(F#1, female age 18, first sex age 13)

In the case of F#1, this fear contributed to her *not consistent* contraceptive use. For F#9, her fear influenced her decision to use condoms instead of the pill because her partner would be responsible for keeping the condoms and so her mother would not see that she was using contraception.

In addition to being able to talk about sex with her mother openly, it was clear that for F#2, her mother played a direct role in her contraceptive behaviour since she started to have sex:

I: When you told your mother you had sex, what did she say?

F#2: She wanted to know with whom it had been, I told her it was with my boyfriend. She asked what I was taking, if he used a condom....And then she asked me to protect myself, she asked me to go to the gynaecologist, she even took me to the gynaecologist, we went. And he [the doctor] prescribed a contraceptive pill for me to take and I started to take it.
(F#2, female age 16, first sex age 14)

At the time of the interview, F#2 had stopped taking the pill and was taking the monthly injection. She stated that her mother gave her money every month to pay for the injection and always ensured that her daughter was having it on time. The role of the mother ensuring contraceptive use was also found for F#5, whose contraceptive use had *not* been consistent before she got pregnant and who had not talked about sex with her mother. However since F#5 had her child, her mother began to remind her frequently to take the pill:

I: Have your parents talked to you about contraception?

F#5: My mother has, this one [pill] that I'm using now she said. She always gives some reminders like "Are you taking it? Be careful not to get pregnant and...because you already have a child and it is too early".
(F#5, female age 18, first sex age 16)

Therefore, for three of the females whose contraceptive use was *consistent*, their mother not only *knew* that they were sexually active but also supported and in two cases ensured contraceptive use. Nevertheless, the other three females that had *consistent* contraceptive use (F#9, F#16 and F#18) all had *poor* verbal sexual communication with their mothers who also did not know that they were sexually active. This shows that even though mothers may influence their daughter's contraceptive use, their role is not essential. Similar to the young men and as shown in Diagram 8.6, there are many other factors that help explain the young women's contraceptive behaviour.

Non-parental Factors

Similar to young men, the females that used contraception *consistently* had a higher perception of risk than those that were *not consistent*. The latter group had a lower perception of risk not only due to naivety (a belief that they would not get pregnant or acquire an STI), but because these females stated they trusted their partners (because they believed their partners were faithful to them and did not have an STI) and that they would practice withdrawal, thus preventing pregnancy.

The females who were *consistent* with their contraceptive use also reported talking about sex with their partners and anticipated sex to happen. Through sex talk, the young women discussed contraceptive use with their partners and were prepared for sex when it occurred. In contrast, those that did not protect themselves often had sex unexpectedly and did not talk about sex with their partners. Contraceptive use was therefore the decision of their partners – if a condom had been used, then it was because their partner had decided to use one.

In addition, some of the young women mentioned that they themselves did not like to use condoms because they believed it “was not the same with a condom” and so they did not encourage their partners to use one. It was interesting to hear from F#12 that her partner had wanted them to use a condom but she refused because she felt “it was not natural” and so began taking the pill before they started to have sex.

Lastly, for one of the females, F#5, started to take the pill consistently because she had previously become pregnant and had a child and she did not want to have another child. However, F#8 and F#14 both had children but this did not change their contraceptive behaviour as they both continued to have unprotected sex.

In general, although some evidence of parental influence was found, young women’s contraceptive use appeared very complex because it varies by individual, each partner interaction, and is influenced by a multitude of factors.

8.3.3 Summary of Parental Influence on General Contraceptive Use

Consistent patterns of parental influence on general contraceptive use were not found for either the young men or women interviewed. Nevertheless, there was some evidence that *verbal sexual communication with mother* for both genders plays a role. One of the males interviewed, explained that his mother’s frequent reminder that condoms should be used during sex influenced him to use them *consistently*. For some of the young women, sex talk with mother also played a role by allowing the females to talk to them about contraception, be reminded of

their importance, openly take the pill and by enabling the direct involvement of some of the mothers in their contraceptive use. Nevertheless, though there were indications that mothers can play a role in the contraceptive behaviour of their children, they are not sufficient because it became clear that contraceptive use is complex and is influenced by a variety of factors, which vary depending on the individual, sexual dyad, and other issues at the time of intercourse.

8.4 Conclusions and Discussion of Chapter 8

The analysis of the in-depth interviews provided further evidence of parental influence on young people's sexuality and how this operates, in particular for sexual attitudes, timing of first sex and general contraceptive use. Parental influence on the timing of first sex of both the young men and women was the more consistent, as there were clear patterns and differences in the parental background of those that had '*earlier*' and '*later*' sex. For sexual attitudes and general contraceptive use, the parental influence was not as clear cut, but the discourses and experiences of the young men and women suggested that *verbal sexual communication* with parents was particularly influential.

The fact that parental influence was more consistently found for timing of first sex may signify that in reality, this outcome is more influenced by parents than sexual attitudes and general contraceptive use. However, this difference may also be due to difficulties and limitations in analysing sexual attitudes and general contraceptive use through the in-depth interviews. As explained earlier in the chapter, when the interviewees were asked to talk about their sexual attitudes, it became clear that they were very complex and so could not be easily categorised. To make the analysis more clear cut, it was decided to focus only on the participants' general attitudes towards young people having sex. The problem that was encountered is that despite trying to focus the analysis on one set of attitudes, those same attitudes were not explored in enough depth in the interviews. In order to have conducted a more thorough analysis, the in-depth interviews needed to have been designed more specifically to examine the participant's attitudes about young people's sexual behaviour or another topic in more detail. That is, it might have been more beneficial if instead of a

general investigation of sexual attitudes, the participants could have been asked to talk in greater depth about their attitudes towards specific sexual issues. If this had been done, then it might have been possible to examine differences and similarities between the attitudes of the young people and parents interviewed more efficiently.

In respect to general contraceptive use, only few of the sexual active young men and women interviewed were *consistent* in their contraceptive behaviour. Though this is reflective of the reality of young people's contraceptive use (only a minority use contraception, as shown in the survey), it might have been beneficial to have interviewed, for example, young men who reported using a condom at first sex. Because these young men are unique, it would have been interesting to explore their parental background and compare it to those who did not use a condom at first sex. Thus perhaps the interviewees should have been selected more specifically to ensure that there were more distinct groups in terms of contraceptive use.

In terms of the other parental influence factors investigated – such as parental non-verbal reaction to sexual scenes on TV, nudity, relationship between parents and affection - no evidence of their influence from the in-depth interviews was found. Reasons for this are threefold: First, some of the parental influence factors varied across the interviewees tremendously and so there were no patterns observed – as in the case of parental non-verbal feelings and reactions to sexual scenes on TV and nudity. Second, in the case of parental sexual attitudes and relationship between parents, there was not enough variation between the interviewees. Most of the parents of the young people interviewed either accepted young men but not the women having pre-marital sex and most of the relationships between the parents of the young people interviewed were very distant – alcoholism and abuse in the relationships (mainly verbal and physical) were common. Third, the lack of any evidence of some of the parental influence factors may be because some of them were not appropriately investigated, as in the case of physical affection. As in the survey, it was very difficult to measure and essentially get an accurate portrayal from the in-depth interviews of the physical affection that occurred in the families. For example, it became clear that it was not enough to just ask the young people

about the extent to which they received physical affection from their parents but what the physical touch communicated and signified to each individual should have been explored. For example, in the case of one of the young men interviewed, M#10, his mother was frequently affectionate towards him (kissed him everyday when she returned home from work) but he said he did not like it and tried to avoid it. In general, the way this study approached affection was limited and therefore the conclusions related to affection and its role in young people's sexuality are too.

A more general limitation of the in-depth interviews was the way in which parental influence was investigated. The young people should have been asked more directly about which factors they thought influenced their sexual attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour and specifically, their perception of their parents' influence. This was not asked because before the study was conducted, it was thought that it would be better to explore patterns of parental influence across families instead of asking young people directly how they thought their parents had influenced them. This approach was chosen because the principal investigator did not want to bias the interviewees in reporting parental influence and also because it was thought that it would be difficult for young people to verbalise how their parents had influenced them. However, it is now clear that it would have been valuable to ask at the end of the interviews, specific questions to gauge the perception of the interviewees on the factors that influenced their sexuality and in particular, their parents.

In fact, if this approach had been taken, then it would have been possible to explore parental influence on young people's *sexual knowledge* in the in-depth interviews. Sexual knowledge was only examined in the survey because it was originally thought that it would not be possible to 'measure' the interviewees' sexual knowledge in the interviews, as it was believed that knowledge had to be quantified. In fact, *hypothesis 1.1* which referred specifically to the influence of verbal sexual communication on sexual knowledge was phrased in a quantitative way: "Young people who reported talking less about sex in general or had not talked about a specific sexual topic with their parents would have worse (less accurate) sexual knowledge than those who talked more or had talked about a topic". In hindsight, parental

influence on sexual knowledge could have been explored in the in-depth interviews through a different approach, by asking the interviewees how they had acquired their sexual knowledge and what role their parents had played.

Despite these limitations, the findings in this chapter do provide further evidence of parental influence on young people's sexuality and shows that three of the parental components investigated are key: *verbal sexual communication*, *parental control* and *quality of relationship with parents*. *Verbal sexual communication* was found to play a role in all three of the sexuality outcomes explored. *Parental control* was linked to the timing of first sex of both genders and *quality of relationship* was important for the young men. In addition, the findings suggested that in terms of the influence of mothers and fathers in particular, it seems that as long as young men are *close* to one parent (either of the two) and have *good* verbal sexual communication with one of them, they are likely to delay sexual debut.

Chapter 9: Final Conclusions and Recommendations

This study set out to explore parental influence of young people's sexual knowledge, attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour. It was conducted in Samambaia, a low-income borough of the capital city Brasília. The study fills a gap in the current literature that was pinpointed by the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994, which concluded that the reproductive and sexual health needs of young people had largely been ignored and should be made a priority for research and intervention. This gap is particularly evident in Brazil, where very few studies have been conducted examining parental influence on young people's sexuality.

The study was conducted against the global background of young people becoming sexually active at increasingly younger ages (FHI, 2002). In Brazil, the median age at first intercourse of women aged 20-24 years was 18.7 years, whilst that for women aged 45-49 was 20.7 years. A similar trend was found for men (BEMFAM, 1996). Brazil has the highest number of people living with HIV in Latin America (UNAIDS, 2003). Mirroring the increase of HIV amongst youth internationally (UNAIDS, 2002b), 56 per cent of all notified cases of AIDS between 1980 and 1999 were of people in the 15-34 age group. It is believed that due to the long latency period between infection with HIV and the onset of AIDS, most of these people were infected during their adolescent years (Santos and Santos, 1999). Young people's fertility rate has also been rising: between 1993 and 1996, the number of deliveries in the 10-14 age group increased by 20% and that in the 15-19 age group by 11% (Domingues, 1999). Against this backdrop, this study provides important data on parental influences on young people's sexuality, which can inform interventions aimed at improving the reproductive and sexual health of Brazilian youth. To the author's knowledge, no other research has been conducted in Brazil with a focus on the parental influence factors identified in the objectives given below and the sexuality of low-income Brazilian youth.

This study had the following research objectives:

1. To describe the nature of young men's and women's sexuality in a low-income community of Brazil, by focusing on their sources of sexual information, sexual knowledge, attitudes and different aspects of their sexual behaviour.
2. To describe the characteristics of parental influence, separately for males and females, by focusing on the following factors: verbal and non-verbal sexual communication, parental sexual attitudes and the quality of relationship between young people and parents.
3. To explore the influence of parental factors on the sexual knowledge, attitudes, timing of first intercourse and contraceptive behaviour of young men and women.

It aimed to answer three general research questions: (1) What is the nature of young men's and young women's sexuality in a low-income community of Brazil? (2) What are the characteristics of parental influence factors? (3) Do parental factors influence the sexual knowledge, attitudes, age at first intercourse and contraceptive behaviour of young men and young women?

Following recommended practice, this study used a methodology that combined qualitative and quantitative methods. The data were collected in Samambaia in three phases between May and November 2001, through 8 focus groups, 1077 questionnaires and 138 semi-structured in-depth interviews. The participants in the focus groups and in-depth interviews were secondary school students and their parents and the survey questionnaire was administered to students aged 13-24.

9.1 The Context of Young People's Sexuality

Young people and parents in the focus groups stated that the three main sources of sexual information for young people were: peers, school and television. This finding was confirmed by the survey data. For both genders, mothers provided more information than fathers. Interestingly, health services were among the least frequent sources for both genders. The participants in the focus groups agreed that parents and schools should be the primary sources of sexual information, indicating that young people trust parents and teachers in this context. The survey confirmed the importance of these desired sources. It is noteworthy that parents were ranked higher by young people as *desired* sources than as *actual* ones, suggesting there is insufficient communication between parents and young people. In addition, for both genders, romantic partners were among the top two desired sources.

The focus group discussions showed that young people are well informed about sexual risks and preventative methods because the information is widely available. However, the survey pinpointed some alarming gaps in their knowledge, especially in relation to STIs. For example, only about 60% of young men and women knew that the contraceptive pill does not prevent disease transmission; only about half knew that choosing a 'healthy-looking' sexual partner does not prevent disease and the majority thought they were less likely to get a disease if they had sex with someone they knew.

There was a gender bias in the attitudes of young people towards sex before marriage: whilst young men had more 'liberal' attitudes than women, both genders were less 'liberal' about young women's sexual behaviour. More young men (60%) than women (30%) reported having had sexual intercourse. The mean age at first intercourse was 14 for young men and 15.8 for young women, similar to the most recent DHS (BEMFAM, 1996). Whilst condoms were the main contraceptive method used by young people, only a minority reported using them at their first and last intercourse. Young men generally reported significantly more partners in the last year and in their lifetime than the women, most of whom had had one sexual partner in the last year and in their lifetime.

Verbal sexual communication between couples was rare and both genders reported a desire to talk to their partners more.

In general, these descriptive findings highlight many concerning features with respect to reproductive and sexual health and support the need for implementing interventions.

9.2 The Context of Young People's Relationship with their Parents

The focus groups and survey findings showed that verbal sexual communication between young people and parents was generally low. When sex is discussed at home, it is more common for parents to do the talking, not young people. Sons feel more comfortable discussing the subject with their fathers, whilst daughters would rather discuss it with their mothers. The fathers talked about sex less than the mothers, so young males tend to experience less verbal sexual communication with their parents than females. For both genders, dating ("*namoro*") was the most commonly talked about topic with mothers and fathers.

In the focus groups, the majority of parents were against young people having sex too early because of sexual risks and pregnancy. Nevertheless, parents were more against young women having sex than men, mainly because they are the ones who get pregnant. This gender-bias was also found in the survey. The focus groups and in-depth interviews confirmed *hypothesis 1.3* that through verbal sexual communication, young people form their perceptions of their parents' sexual attitudes. In fact, the findings show that for parental attitudes to be communicated adequately, they need to be expressed verbally.

Both the focus groups and survey findings showed that most young people were closer to their mothers than to their fathers. They tended to spend more time with their mothers and talked to them more. Nevertheless, there was a lot of conflict in their relationships and having an 'absent' father was common. Both the young people and parents expressed a desire to have closer relationships.

In terms of the non-verbal sexual communication factors, the focus groups and survey showed that parental control varied by gender – young women generally experienced more control than young men and fathers were generally stricter than mothers. Parental non-verbal reactions to sex-related scenes on TV also varied by gender as parents were more likely to react and appear less comfortable in front of young women than young men. The focus groups and in-depth interviews supported *hypothesis 4.1*, confirming that through parental control and reactions to sex-related scenes on TV, young people learn about their parents' sexual attitudes. Most of the young people in the survey perceived their parents to have a 'good' relationship but according to the young people in the in-depth interviews, alcoholism and verbal and physical abuse was common. In terms of physical affection, the focus groups and survey showed that both genders received more affection from their mothers and that, with age, they received less affection from their parents. Physical affection between parents was infrequent and taboo. Nudity in the home varied but mother's generally were more open than fathers and young people commonly stopped being nude in front of their parents as puberty began.

9.3 Survey and In-depth Interview Results of Parental Influence on Young People's Sexuality

The logistic regression models and the in-depth interviews provided evidence of parental influence on young people's sexual knowledge, attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive use. The findings related to each of the parental influence factors are presented next in turn.

Verbal Sexual Communication

The survey findings showed that *verbal sexual communication with mothers* was related to the sexual knowledge of both genders. Both the *extent* and *factual content* of verbal sexual communication were found to be important. For males, those who '*rarely*' (extent) talked about sex with their mothers were more likely to have '*low*' sexual knowledge compared to those who talked '*often*'. For females, those who had *not* talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS (factual content)

with their mothers compared to those who had, were also more likely to have 'low' knowledge. These findings are supported by previous research (e.g. Pick and Palos, 1995) and corroborate *hypothesis 1.1* which stated that verbal sexual communication with parents would be related to young people's sexual knowledge.

Verbal sexual communication with fathers was related to the sexual attitudes of males. Specifically, young men aged 17-24 who talked about sex 'often' with their fathers were significantly more likely to have 'liberal' attitudes. This finding is opposite to what was predicted in *hypothesis 1.2*, as it stated that the less young men talked about sex with their parents, the more likely they would have 'liberal' attitudes. Nevertheless, this finding is not surprising since both the focus groups and in-depth interviews revealed that when fathers talk to their sons about sex, they commonly encourage them to be sexually active. This result confirms the importance of the *content* of verbal sexual communication and not just the extent (Jaccard *et al.*, 1996). In particular, it shows that *verbal sexual communication* should not be investigated as a separate variable from *parental sexual attitudes* (as it was in this study), as the latter is communicated through the former. Future studies into verbal sexual communication should investigate in more detail not just what sexual topics young people and parents talk about, but what attitudes related to different topics are conveyed.

The in-depth interviews also confirmed the link between *verbal sexual communication* and young people's sexual attitudes. For example, the female's experiences showed that when mothers engage in open conversations about sex, their daughters are likely to have similar attitudes to them, whether 'liberal' or 'conservative'. This finding partly supports *hypothesis 1.2* in that it shows that the extent of verbal sexual communication is related to young women's sexual attitudes. However, this finding also shows that a greater *extent* or *openness* in verbal sexual communication does not result in young women having 'conservative' attitudes as the hypothesis predicted. Instead, the finding shows that the type of attitude that young women hold is likely to be similar to their mothers, whether 'liberal' or 'conservative', depending on their mothers'

attitudes. Therefore, as argued in the previous paragraph, *what* is communicated is key.

Though the survey results did not show a significant relationship between *verbal sexual* communication and timing of first sex, the in-depth interviews found a consistent pattern. Specifically, most of the young men and women who experienced *good* (open) verbal sexual communication with either their mother or father had sex 'later' or were virgins. This finding is in the same direction as predicted by *hypothesis 1.2* and is also supported by previous research (e.g. Ingham, 1998). In addition, the *content* of communication was found to influence 'earlier' sex of males when there was explicit verbal encouragement by fathers or acceptance of early sexual debut from parents.

Verbal sexual communication was also found to be related to condom use. Young men who *had* talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS (factual content) with their mothers were more likely than those who had not, to have used a condom at first sex. Young women who '*never*' talked to their fathers about sex compared to those who either talked '*often*' or '*sometimes*' were *less* likely to have used a condom at first intercourse. Though the in-depth interviews clearly showed that condom use is complex and multi-factorial, it also provided evidence that *verbal sexual communication* with mothers about condoms and other methods led to their use by some of the young people interviewed. These findings are as predicted by *hypothesis 1.2* and are in line with previous studies (e.g. Fisher, 1987; Handelsman *et al.*; 1987).

In general, both the survey and in-depth interview findings about *verbal sexual communication* with mothers and fathers found evidence of its influence on the four sexuality outcomes, as predicted by the study's hypotheses 1.1 and 1.2. The in-depth interviews in particular highlighted the importance of *open* verbal sexual communication, in which both young people and parents freely exchange ideas, ask questions and listen to one another. One implication of this is that future quantitative studies should include specific questions about these characteristics of 'openness', in order to obtain a better measure of verbal sexual communication.

Parental Sexual Attitudes

In terms of the influence of *parental sexual attitudes*, the survey found that *mother's sexual attitude* was related to the attitudes of both genders. Young men and women who stated their mothers had '*liberal*' sexual attitudes towards young people having sex were more likely to have '*liberal*' attitudes themselves. The survey also found that *parental attitudes* were related to the timing of first sex of males. Specifically, young men who reported that their mothers had '*liberal*' sexual attitudes were significantly more likely to have '*early*' sex. As discussed above, in the verbal sexual communication section, both these findings were also supported by the in-depth interviews. In general, the survey and in-depth interview findings supported the study's *hypothesis 2* and are in line with other research (e.g. Luster and Small, 1994; Weinsten & Thornton, 1989).

Quality of Relationship between Young People and Parents

The *quality of relationship with mothers* was related to the sexual attitudes of non-virgin females. Specifically, young women who had sex and had a *poorer* quality of relationship with their mothers were more likely to have '*liberal*' sexual attitudes compared to those that had a *better* quality of relationship. This specific result related to *non-virgin females* was not anticipated but is in the direction hypothesised in *hypothesis 3*. Possible explanations for this relationship were provided in chapter 7.

The *quality of relationship with fathers* was also associated with the timing of first sexual intercourse of males. Young men who had a *poorer* quality of relationship with their fathers were more likely to have '*early*' sex compared to those that had a better quality of relationship. The in-depth interviews also supported this finding, because it showed that the majority of young men that had '*earlier*' sex had a '*distant*' relationship with their parents whilst those that had '*later*' sex were '*close*' to their mothers or both parents. These results are as expected (*hypothesis 3*) and are consistent with other studies (e.g. Resnick *et al.*, 1997).

It is very interesting that both the survey and in-depth interviews found *quality of relationship with parents* to be related to the timing of first sex of young men but not of young women. This finding is unexpected especially since previous studies have found *quality of relationship with parents* to influence young women's timing of first sex (e.g. Inazu & Fox, 1980, Resnick *et al.*, 1997). One possible explanation is that the 'cut off' age (16) for 'early' sex used in this study for females was not young enough to find an influence. That is, perhaps a relationship was found for young men because a younger 'cut off' age (14) was used and it may be that *quality of relationship with parents* influences very 'early' sex in particular. However, this explanation is not entirely convincing as many of the young women interviewed who had 'later' sex (above 16) had a '*distant*' relationship with their parents. An alternative explanation is that the biased sexual attitudes towards young women having sex in Samambaia have an overriding influence on the timing of females' first sex. In contrast to young men, young women having sex before marriage is viewed negatively and they therefore have a societal pressure not to have sex, which in itself deters them from having sex early. As young men do not have this pressure (in fact they are often encouraged to have sex early), then other influences, such as quality of relationship with parents, may play a stronger role in determining the timing of their first intercourse. If this explanation is true, then it supports the importance of conducting studies of parental influence in different cultural settings. Perhaps in certain American populations, *quality of relationship with parents* does have a significant influence on the timing of first sex of young women, because the society's attitudes towards both genders having sex is more equal.

In addition to providing further evidence of quality of relationship with parents on the timing of first sex of males, the in-depth interviews revealed that the most important factor that characterised a *close* relationship with parents was the quality of their general communication. That is, those who talked to their parents frequently and exchanged information about their lives were the closest. This has important implications for both future research and interventions. For research, it suggests that when studying young people's quality of relationship with their parents, the quality of their general communication should be examined. For interventions, it implies that one

practical way to enhance young people's relationship with their parents is to focus on improving their general communication.

Parental Control

The survey found that *parental control* was related to the sexual knowledge and condom use of young men and the timing of young women's first intercourse. First, young men who were *never* allowed out at night by their parents were more likely to have 'low' sexual knowledge. This result had not been anticipated but a possible explanation was provided in chapter 7. Second, young men who were *sometimes* or *never* allowed out at night by their parents were more likely to use a condom at first intercourse. Third, young women who were *always* allowed out at night by their parents were more likely to have 'early' sex. This latter finding was also supported by the in-depth interviews: most young men and women that 'lacked' parental control had 'earlier' sex whilst those that experienced 'balanced' control had 'later' sex. These findings support *hypothesis 5* and corroborate previous studies (e.g. Benda & DiBlasio, 1994; Luster and Small, 1994; Miller *et al.*, 1986).

The in-depth interviews highlighted the varying levels of control that parents exert. Critically, they revealed that the most successful kind of control was one that balanced rules and regulations with opportunities for young people to make their own choices when appropriate.

Parental Non-verbal Feelings and Reactions to Sex-related Scenes on TV

The survey showed that *fathers' non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scenes on TV* was related to the sexual attitudes of both genders and condom use at first intercourse of males. Young men and women who stated that their fathers were *very comfortable* about sex-related scenes on TV were significantly more likely to have 'liberal' attitudes. These results are in support of the study's *hypothesis 4.1*. In addition, for the young men only, those who reported that their fathers were *very comfortable* about sex-related scenes on TV were more likely to have used a condom at first intercourse. This finding was in the opposite direction to that anticipated and a possible explanation was provided in chapter 7.

Other Parental Factors

In terms of the other non-verbal sexual communication factors that this study explored (i.e. quality of relationship between parents, physical affection and nudity), neither the survey nor the in-depth interviews found any evidence of their influence on the four sexuality outcomes. Possible explanations for this were provided in Chapters 7 and 8. Nevertheless, the influence of other 'parental factors' that were not in the original conceptual framework of this study emerged from the analysis of the in-depth interviews; specifically, the influence of a father's explicit sexual behaviour on his son's sexual debut and a female's experience of sexual abuse.

Summary of Parental Influence Findings

In general, both the survey and in-depth interviews provided evidence of parental influence on the four aspects of young people's sexuality examined. Out of the 8 parental factors investigated, 5 were found to play a role in one or more of the outcomes and these were: *verbal sexual communication*, *parental sexual attitudes*, *quality of relationship with parents*, *parental control* and *parental non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scenes on TV*. Many of the findings are similar to those of studies conducted in the USA and other developed countries, suggesting that, despite the cultural differences with Samambaia, parents seem to have a similar influence on young people's sexuality. Another possible explanation for the similarities is that, despite the poverty, Samambaia may not be so culturally different from the USA in comparison to other developing countries. Future studies in African and Asian contexts, for example, could address this issue.

The summary of the parental influence results from the survey and in-depth interviews earlier, highlighted the advantage of using a multi-method approach. First, because several of the results were found through both methods (triangulation), this added strength and validity to the findings. Second, as some results were only found through one of the methods, if only one method had been used there would have been less evidence of parental influence. For example, the relationship between *verbal sexual communication*

and timing of first sex of young men and women was only found in the in-depth interviews. This is probably because in the survey, verbal sexual communication was only measured in terms of extent and content (factual) and was examined separately from parental sexual attitudes. The in-depth interviews clearly showed that openness in communication and *what was communicated (parental attitudes)* was what was related to timing of first sex. Hence by using a multi-method approach, limitations of one method may be overcome by the other and provide information that can be used to develop better measures for future studies.

9.4 Contribution of Thesis to the Literature

This study addressed several limitations which existed in the literature. First, it filled a gap in the Brazilian reproductive and sexual health literature by providing descriptive information about young people's sexuality and the parental influence factors. Second, to the author's knowledge, no previous published study was conducted in Brazil with a focus on parental influence on young people's sexuality. Third, this study shed light on some controversial findings in the literature, in particular in relation to verbal sexual communication. As summarised earlier, both the survey and in-depth interviews confirmed that parental verbal sexual communication is related to young people's sexual knowledge, attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour. Fourth, this study explored factors of *non-verbal sexual communication* that had either not been researched before or examined in only a few studies. These included: parental non-verbal feelings/reactions to sex-related scenes on TV; nudity; quality of relationship between parents; and physical affection between parents and young people. Of these, only parental non-verbal feelings to sex-related scenes on TV was found to be important. Lastly, in contrast to many previous studies, this study examined the influence of mothers and fathers on young men and women separately, to see whether parental influence differed by gender. As expected, both the survey and in-depth interview findings showed that mothers and fathers influence young people of both genders and each sexuality outcome differently.

9.5 Recommendations for Interventions

The findings of this study showed clearly that, similar to youth in America and other developed countries, parents play a key role on the sexual knowledge, attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour of young people in a low-income community of Brazil. This suggests that parents should be included in interventions aimed at improving young people's reproductive and sexual health to maximise their impact. The study's findings indicate various aspects of young people's relationship with their parents which could be productive foci for such interventions.

First, *verbal sexual communication*: This study showed that it would be beneficial to increase the extent and quality of the discussions about sex that young people have with their parents. Parents should be made aware that through verbal sexual communication, their attitudes are more clearly expressed and more likely to be adopted by their children. Parents should be encouraged to discuss more sexual subjects with young people, not in order to impose their own views on them but to help them mature, be responsible and make the best choices for themselves. To give parents confidence to do this, they will need to be provided with the latest information and given the opportunity to discuss their views within a framework where they feel comfortable. One way of doing this would be by organising neighbourhood discussion groups for parents to share their experiences and learn from each other's mistakes and achievements. Perhaps, to begin with, such groups could be organised on a gender basis, since one of the findings is that the influence exercised by fathers and mothers on young people is different. Such gender-based groups would also make it easier for parents to overcome their inhibitions about sexual discussion. Another possibility would be to invite parents and their son/daughter to participate in activities where they are guided in how to talk about sex and given the opportunity to practice communicating. (For a review of American interventions aimed at improving verbal sexual communication between young people and parents, see Kirby & Miller, 2002. For specific intervention ideas and activities, see SIECUS, 2002).

Second, *parental sexual attitudes*: Many programmes in Brazil and around the world focus on empowering young women and changing young men's 'macho' attitudes towards women and sexuality (Barbosa *et al.*, 1998; Meneghel *et al.*, 2003). Nevertheless, this study shows that these traditional, biased attitudes are also held by parents and that parents play a role in perpetuating the gender stereotypes. Interventions therefore, should also focus on changing the biased attitudes of parents, by making them aware of how their attitudes influence their children's own attitudes and increase their sexual risk. Parents should be informed about how their attitudes are mainly transmitted through verbal sexual communication but also non-verbally, for example, in the way they react or are perceived to feel about sex-related scenes on TV and in the way they control their children. This can be done by holding community meetings to discuss gender norms and parents' own attitudes. Alternatively, a mass media campaign promoting gender equality and parental communication could be implemented.

Third, *quality of relationship between young people and parents*: This study confirmed that the quality of relationship that young people have with their parents influences their sexuality. In addition, the qualitative data (focus groups and in-depth interviews) showed that many young people and parents are dissatisfied with their relationships – there is a lot of conflict, lack of respect, etc. An intervention should be developed to help improve young people's relationship with their parents. For example, activities could be held for young people and parents to learn how to communicate with one another and the importance of spending quality time together. It is believed that parents and young people would be interested in participating in such activities as many of those who participated in this study expressed a desire to improve their relationship.

Fourth, *parental control*: This study confirmed that the way parents monitor and control their children is related to young people's sexuality. As shown by the in-depth interviews and by other studies (e.g. Miller *et al.*, 1986), parental control is most effective when it is *balanced*. Interventions should focus on teaching parents the benefits of *balanced* control in comparison to having *excessive* or *lack of* control and be provided with practical ways to best control

their children. Parent education courses on parental control and other factors (quality of relationship, verbal sexual communication, etc) could be provided in their children's schools.

In addition to specific parent-related recommendations, another important finding of this study is that gender plays a central role in young people's sexuality and thus interventions should include gender specific components. For example, the reasons for non-use of condoms by young men are different from those of young women. Young people, especially women, need to be taught *negotiating skills* so that they can say 'no' when they want to and be able to convince their partner to use a condom. *Of course, some issues* require a joint solution. For example, one of the findings is that young couples need to communicate more about sex and so providing counselling services for couples could be a way to encourage such communication, as well as help couples cope with relationship and sexual problems.

In terms of other sources of influence, the study found that young people trust teachers as a source of information about sex. Thus, sex education in schools is an important avenue to reach and positively influence young people's sexuality. This study found, for example, that there is a gap in young people's knowledge of STIs and this is one area where schools can do more. Another important finding was that health services are among the least used sources for information as well as condoms. This obviously points to a serious need for outreach programmes through which government/municipal services go to young people instead of waiting for young people to come to them.

9.6 Future Research

The findings of this study have answered some questions but have also raised others. As a result, it is recommended that future research focus on the following areas:

- Although evidence of parental influence on young people's sexuality was demonstrated in this study and possible explanations for the results given, we still do not understand exactly *how* this influence works or through which

mechanisms. Questions to be investigated include: How and why does *openness* in verbal sexual communication lead to 'later' sexual debut? Does *quality of relationship with parents* affect young people's self-esteem? Do balanced levels of *parental control* help young people be more conscious of risks?

- This study suggests that mothers and fathers have different influences on young people's sexuality, but it is not clear *why* this is the case. For example, why was verbal sexual communication with *fathers* in particular related to the condom use of females? How and why does each parent contribute differently to young people's sexuality? Future research should focus on understanding why these gender differences exist for both parents and young people and what this means for interventions.
- Despite not finding any evidence for some of the non-verbal sexual communication factors, further research should explore the influence of *quality of relationship between parents, nudity* and *affection* on young people's sexuality further. As discussed in chapters 7 and 8, there were limitations to the way these factors were investigated in this study which could explain why there were no positive results. In addition, other parental factors should be examined. For example, it would be interesting to investigate another form of non-verbal sexual communication such as parental sexual behaviour. For example, how does awareness of parental sexual behaviour, including extra-marital affairs and use of pornography influence young people?
- The relationship between parental factors on other sexuality outcomes should also be explored to further increase our understanding of parental influence. For example, it would be interesting to examine parental influence on young people's choice of sexual partner, emotional connection during sex, number of sexual partners and verbal sexual communication with partner.
- This study has confirmed that parents play an important role in young people's sexuality, but how does their influence compare to, for example, their peers and teachers? Does parental influence moderate the influence of others sources and if so, in what circumstances? The answers to these

questions are important not only in terms of advancing our understating of parental influence, but because they will determine the extent to which policy and programme developers will focus on parents and other sources.

- To add more weight to the correlational findings of this and other similar studies examining parental influence, future research should implement more complex and innovative statistical techniques. As discussed in chapter 7, the cross-sectional nature of this study means that the relationships between the parental factors and the sexuality outcomes obtained are not causal. Ideally, longitudinal studies should be conducted but these are costly and time consuming. Therefore, it is recommended that future research should focus on conducting more complex statistical analysis such as structural equation modelling (Bollen *et al.*, 1995) to test and correct for endogeneity bias. This type of analysis would allow for a causal interpretation of the associations to be made, adding strength to the evidence of parental influence on young people's sexuality.
- Finally, a comprehensive theory of parental influence on young people's sexuality should be developed and tested to help guide future research and interventions.

The question posed at the start of this thesis was: "Do parents matter?" The results of this work show that indeed they do. Through the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods, this research has provided evidence of parental influence on the sexual knowledge, attitudes, timing of first sex and contraceptive behaviour of the young people in this study. Our challenge now is to understand better the mechanisms through which parental influence occurs and to develop programmes that can creatively involve parents to positively impact the reproductive and sexual health of young people.

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Appendix: Chapter 4

1. Ethical Approval from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE
& TROPICAL MEDICINE

ETHICS COMMITTEE

APPROVAL FORM

Application number: 757



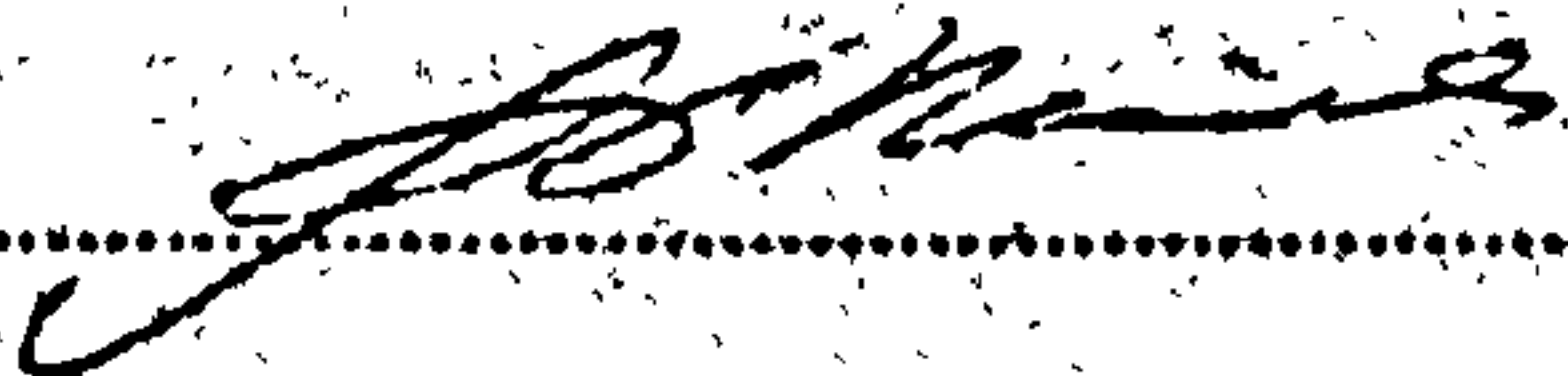
Name of Principal Investigator Ana Claudia Franca-Koh

Department Epidemiology & Population Health

Head of Department Professor Betty Kirkwood

Title Sexual communication: A study of parental and peer influence on the reproductive health of young people in Brazil.

Approval of this study is granted by the Committee.

Chair 
(Professor Andrew Haines, Dean)

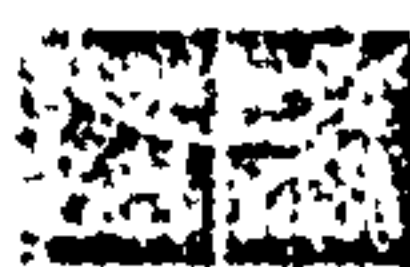
Date 21/5/01

Comments from the Committee:

Approval is dependent on local ethical approval having been received.

Any subsequent changes to the consent form must be re-submitted to the Committee.

2. Ethical Approval from the University of Brasília



Universidade de Brasília
Faculdade de Ciências da Saúde
Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa – CEP/FS

PROCESSO DE ANÁLISE DE PROJETO DE PESQUISA

Registro do Projeto: 005.2001

Título do Projeto: *"Comunicação Sexual: Um estudo sobre a influência dos pais e amigos na saúde reprodutiva do jovem brasileiro".*

Data da Entrada: 13/03/2001

Responsável Principal: Sra. Ana Cláudia França - Koh

Com base na Resolução 196/96 do CNS/MS, que regulamenta a ética da pesquisa em seres humanos, o Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa da Faculdade de Ciências da Saúde da Universidade de Brasília, após análise dos aspectos éticos e do contexto técnico-científico e julgando satisfatória às justificativas e às pendências apresentadas ao relator, resolveu **APROVAR** o projeto 005/2001 com o título: *"Comunicação sexual: Um estudo sobre a influência dos pais e amigos na saúde reprodutiva do jovem brasileiro"*, já analisado em sua 35ª reunião do CEP/FS, realizada no dia 27 de março de 2001.

O pesquisador responsável fica, desde já, notificado da obrigatoriedade da apresentação de relatório sucinto e objetivo sobre o desenvolvimento do Projeto, no prazo de 1 (um) ano a contar da presente data (item VII.13 da Resolução 196/96).

Brasília, 25 de abril de 2001

Prof. Volnei Garrafa
Coordenador do CEP – FS/UnB

Campus Universitário Darcy Ribeiro
Faculdade de Ciências da Saúde
Cep: 70.910-900

Tel: 307-3229/2113

3. Letter from the Education Authority of the Federal District to the Education Authority of Samambaia Town



GOVERNO DO DISTRITO FEDERAL
SECRETARIA DE ESTADO DE EDUCAÇÃO
SUBSECRETARIA DE EDUCAÇÃO PÚBLICA

Referência: REG-GDCA 148057/2001
Interessado: Ana Cláudia França
Assunto: Pesquisa

A Gerência Regional de Ensino de Samambaia,

solicitando o empenho dessa Gerência, no sentido de oportunizar à Senhora Ana Cláudia França, estudante de doutorado em Londres, a realização de pesquisa sobre a importância da comunicação sexual entre jovens, seus pais e amigos, dentro do contexto de saúde reprodutiva e sexual.

Ressaltamos que trata-se de um trabalho sério e criterioso, podendo ser acompanhado, inclusive, pelos técnicos dessa Gerência Regional de Ensino.

Em 6 / 6 / 2001.

Anna M.
ANNA MARIA DANTAS ANTUNES VILLOBOIM
Subsecretária

4. Topics Guides used in the Focus Group Discussions

Topic Guide for Focus Group Discussion with Young People (English version)

List of topics to be discussed and examples of possible questions

1. “Namoro”: Dating

At what age do young people start dating?
 What does it mean to “namorar”?
 What does dating involve?
 What do young people who are dating do together?
 Are there differences for young men and women?
 How do older people, such as parents, feel about young people dating?
 Are there differences for young men and women?

2. Sexual activity

At what age would you say young people start having sex?
 Is it acceptable for young people to have sexual relations before they are married?
 Are there differences for young men and women?
 How do people react if a young woman becomes pregnant or a young man becomes a father?
 How do older people, such as parents, react and feel to young people having sex?
 Are there differences for young men and women?
 Does the way parents feel matter to young people?

3. Reasons for having sex

Why do young men your age have sex?
 What do they gain from having sex?
 Why do young women your age have sex?
 What do they gain from having sex?
 Are young people your age pressured into having sex by friends, boyfriend/girlfriend, or by parents?

4. Risk taking

Are there any risks involved when having sex?
 Are young people who are having sex taking risks?
 Do young men and women take the same or different risks?
 Is AIDS and other STDs a risk for young people who have sex?
 Do young people take the risks seriously?

5. Risk prevention

What do young people your age think about contraception in general?
 Is it used?
 Is it expected to be used?
 Who is normally responsible for protection?
 How do young people feel about talking about contraception with their partners?

6. Condoms

What do young people think about condoms?
 Should men and women carry them around?
 Where do young men and women generally obtain condoms?

7. Main sources of sexual information

How do young people your age usually learn about sex – such as contraception and pregnancy?
Do young men and women learn from the same sources or not?
Who should be responsible for educating young people about sex?
Do young people your age talk with others about topics related to sex? With whom?
Is there anyone that young people don't talk or dislike talking to?

8. Talking about sex with parents

Do young men and women your age talk about sex with parents?
What topics related to sex are young people more likely to discuss with parents?
When parents do talk about sex, how are these topics talked about? Is it adequate?
How do young people feel about talking to their parents about sex?
What are the difficulties of talking to parents about sex?
Is this different for men and women?
How do parents feel about talking to young people about sex?
Is this different for men and women?

9. Non-verbal sexual communication in the home

a) Relationship between parents and young people

In general, what do you think the relationship between parents and young people like these days?
Do young people respect their parents? Do parents respect young people?

b) Gender roles in the home:

Do parents have roles in the home? What are they?
Which parent is more responsible for the upbringing of children?
Which parent has more contact with young people in general?

Do young people have roles in the home? What are they?
Are there differences for young men and women?

c) Monitor and Control:

Are parents strict?
Do they set rules?
Are there rules for dating?
How are the rules applied?
Are the rules the same for young men and women?

In general, when young people go out somewhere, do they tell their parents where they are going?
Do parents let young people go out at night?
Are there differences for young men and women?

d) Affection:

Are parents affectionate with young people? (For example, do they caress, kiss, or hug their children?)
In general, who is more affectionate, mothers or fathers?
Are there differences for young men and women?

Are young people affectionate with parents?
Are young people more affectionate with mothers or with fathers?
Are there differences for young men and women?

Nudity:

In general, how do parents feel about showing their bodies to young people?
For example, do they change in front of their children?
Are there differences for young men and women?

How do young people feel about showing their bodies to their parents?
For example, do they change in front of their parents?
Are there differences for young men and women?

f) TV:

How do young people feel seeing sexual scenes, such as a couple kissing passionately, on TV?
How do they feel when parents are present?
How do parents feel?
Do young people or parents react in any specific way? How?

Topic Guide for Focus Group Discussion with Parents (English version)

List of topics to be discussed and examples of possible questions

1. Dating and young people

How do parents feel about young people dating?
Is dating encouraged or discouraged by parents?
Is this different for young men and women?

2. Sexual behaviour of young people

What do parents think of young people having sex?
Is it acceptable for young people to have sexual relations when they are not married?
How do people react if a young woman becomes pregnant or a young man becomes a father?

At what age do parents think young people are starting to have sex today?
Why do you think young people today having sex earlier?

Can parents influence young people's behaviour in anyway?
Are parents responsible for young people's sexual behaviour in anyway?

3. Sexual risk and contraception

Do you think young people today are taking risks when they have sex?
What kind of risks do young people take when they have sex?
Are there differences for young men and women?
Are young people aware of these risks?

What do parent think of young people using contraception such as condoms?

What do parents think of young people carrying condoms with them? Are there differences for young men and women?

What do you think of parents helping their children obtain contraception, such as condoms?

4. Sex Education In general

Where do young people get most of their information about sex?
What do you think about young people talking about sex with their friends?
What role does the media play in informing young people about sex?

Who should be responsible for teaching young people about sex?
Should young people be given information related to sex?

5. Parents talking to young people about sex

Should parents teach young people about sex?
Do parents talk to young people about sex?
How do parents feel about talking to young people about sex?
Are there certain topics that parents are more comfortable talking about?
When parents do talk to their children about sex, how are these topics talked about?
Are there any differences between talking to young men and young women about sex?
What are the difficulties of talking to young people about sex?

6. Non-verbal sexual communication in the home:

a) Relationship between parents and young people:

In general, what do parents think about the relationship between parents and young people these days? Do young people respect their parents? Do parents respect young people?

b) Gender roles in the home:

Do parents have roles in the home? What are they?
Which parent is more responsible for the upbringing of children?
Which parent has more contact with young people in general?

Do young people have roles in the home? What are they?
Are there differences for young men and women?

c) Monitor and Control:

Are parents strict?
Do they set rules?
Are there rules for dating?
How are the rules applied?
Are the rules the same for young men and women?

In general, when young people go out somewhere, do they tell their parents where they are going?
Do parents let young people go out at night?
Are there differences for young men and women?

d) Affection:

Are parents affectionate with young people? (For example, do they caress, kiss, or hug their children?)
In general, who is more affectionate, mothers or fathers?
Are there differences for young men and women?

Are young people affectionate with parents?
Are young people more affectionate with mothers or with fathers?
Are there differences for young men and women?

e) Nudity:

In general, how do parents feel about showing their bodies to young people?
For example, do they change in front of their children?
Are there differences for young men and women?

How do young people feel about showing their bodies to their parents?
For example, do they change in front of their parents?
Are there differences for young men and women?

f) TV:

How do parents feel seeing sexual scenes, such as a couple kissing passionately, on TV?
How do parents feel when young people are present?
How do young people feel?
Do parents or young people react in any specific way? How?

5. Self-completion Questionnaire used in the Survey

Self Completion Questionnaire
(English Version)

To answer the questions, please tick ✓ the appropriate box ☐ or write ✎ your answer.

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC AND FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS

1. Are you male or female? ☐ Male ☐ Female
2. How old are you? _____ ✎
3. What grade are you in? _____ ✎
4. How well do you believe you perform at your school compared to others in your class?

☐ Above average ☐ Average ☐ Below Average
5. With whom do you live with at home?
Tick ✓ all those you live with

☐ my father
☐ my mother
☐ my step-mother (or woman who is my father's partner)
☐ my step-father (or man who is my mother's partner)
☐ my sister(s)
☐ my brother(s)
☐ my grandmother(s)
☐ my grandfather(s)

If other people live with you at home, please write who they are:

_____ ✎

_____ ✎

6. How many brothers do you have? _____ ✎
Please write the age(s) of your brother(s) _____ ✎
7. How many sisters do you have? _____ ✎
Please write the age(s) of your sister(s) _____ ✎

8. What Is your current relationship situation?

- ☐ I do not have a boyfriend or girlfriend
- ☐ I'm in a relationship – "namorando"
- ☐ I'm living with my partner
- ☐ I'm married
- ☐ I'm separated/divorced
- ☐ Other

9. Do you have any children?

- ☐ Yes If yes, please write their ages:_____
- ☐ No

10. What Is your parents' current relationship status?

- ☐ They live together
- ☐ They are married
- ☐ They are separated/divorced
- ☐ My father has passed away
- ☐ My mother has passed away
- ☐ Both my parents have passed away

11. How old Is your father (or step-father)? _____

- ☐ I do not know ☐ Not applicable to me

12. How old Is your mother (or step-mother)? _____

- ☐ I do not know ☐ Not applicable to me

13. What Is the highest level of education of your parents?

Level of Education	Father (or step-father)	Mother (or step-mother)
Never went to school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did not complete primary school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Completed primary school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Secondary school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
University	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not applicable to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. Who earns money in your home?

- ☐ I do
- ☐ My father (or step-father)
- ☐ My mother (or step-mother)
- ☐ My brother
- ☐ My sister
- ☐ My husband
- ☐ My wife
- ☐ Other. Please specify:_____

15. Who earns most in your home?

- ☐ I do
- ☐ My father (or step-father)
- ☐ My mother (or step-mother)
- ☐ My brother
- ☐ My sister
- ☐ My husband
- ☐ My wife
- ☐ Other. Please specify: _____

16. The total income of your home is:

- ☐ Less than a minimum salary
- ☐ A minimum salary
- ☐ Two to three minimum salaries
- ☐ Four to five minimum salaries
- ☐ Six to seven minimum salaries
- ☐ More than seven minimum salaries

17. What is your and your parents' religion?

Religion	Your	Father (or step-father)	Mother (or step-mother)
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Roman Catholic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Protestant/Evangelical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spiritualist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Umbanda	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Candomble	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not applicable to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. How religious are you and your parents?

Religiosity	Your	Father/male guardian	Mother/female guardian
Very religious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quite religious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Little religious	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not religious at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not applicable to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 2: PARENTS # 1

19. Is your mother (or step-mother) strict?

☐ Very ☐ Quite ☐ A little ☐ No ☐ Not applicable to me

20. Is your father (or step-father) strict?

☐ Very ☐ Quite ☐ A little ☐ No ☐ Not applicable to me

21. When you go out, do you tell your parents where you are going?

☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Usually ☐ Always ☐ Not applicable to me

22. Do your parents allow you to go out at night?

☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Usually ☐ Always ☐ Not applicable to me

23. Do you quarrel with your mother (or step-mother)?

☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Not applicable to me

24. Do you quarrel with your father (or step-father)?

☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Not applicable to me

25. Do your parents quarrel?

☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Not applicable to me

26. Which parent do you spend most time with?

☐ Mother ☐ Father ☐ Both the same ☐ Not applicable to me

27. In general, what is your relationship with your mother (or step-mother) like?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Reasonable ☐ Bad ☐ Not applicable to me

28. In general, what is your relationship with your father (or step-father) like?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Reasonable ☐ Bad ☐ Not applicable to me

29. In general, what is your parents' relationship like?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Reasonable ☐ Bad ☐ Not applicable to me

- 30. In the last seven days, how many meals did you have with your mother (or step-mother)?**
- ☐ None
- ☐ 1 or 2 meals
- ☐ 3 to 5 meals
- ☐ 6 to 7 meals
- ☐ More than 8 meals
- ☐ Not applicable to me
- 31. In the last seven days, how many meals did you have with your father (or step-father)?**
- ☐ None
- ☐ 1 or 2 meals
- ☐ 3 to 5 meals
- ☐ 6 to 7 meals
- ☐ More than 8 meals
- ☐ Not applicable to me
- 32. With which parent do you talk to the most about things related to you (e.g. your school, your friends, etc)?**
- ☐ Mother ☐ Father ☐ Both the same ☐ Not applicable to me
- 33. How frequent do you talk to your mother (or step-mother) about things related to you?**
- ☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Not applicable to me
- 34. In the last seven days, did you talk to your mother (or step-mother) about things related to you?**
- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable to me
- 35. How frequent do you talk to your father (or step-father) about things related to you?**
- ☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Not applicable to me
- 36. In the last seven days, did you talk to your father (or step-father) about things related to you?**
- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable to me
- 37. How frequent do you talk to your mother (or step-mother) about topics related to sex?**
- ☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Not applicable to me
- 38. How frequent do you talk to your father (or step-father) about topics related to sex?**
- ☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Not applicable to me

39. Which sexual topics have you talked about with your mother (or step-mother)?

- ☐ Couple relationships – “namoro”
- ☐ When to start having sex
- ☐ Contraceptive methods in general
- ☐ Condoms
- ☐ STDs and HIV/AIDS
- ☐ Pregnancy
- ☐ Physical/sexual development (e.g. menstruation or ejaculation)
- ☐ Masturbation
- ☐ Sexual intercourse
- ☐ Her own sexual experiences
- ☐ None of these topics
- ☐ Not applicable to me

40. Which sexual topics do you think you could never talk about with your mother (step-mother)?

- ☐ Couple relationships – “namoro”
- ☐ When to start having sex
- ☐ Contraceptive methods in general
- ☐ Condoms
- ☐ STDs and HIV/AIDS
- ☐ Pregnancy
- ☐ Physical/sexual development (e.g. menstruation or ejaculation)
- ☐ Masturbation
- ☐ Sexual intercourse
- ☐ Her own sexual experiences
- ☐ None, I could talk about all of these topics
- ☐ Not applicable to me

41. Which sexual topics have you talked about with your father (or step-father)?

- ☐ Couple relationships – “namoro”
- ☐ When to start having sex
- ☐ Contraceptive methods in general
- ☐ Condoms
- ☐ STDs and HIV/AIDS
- ☐ Pregnancy
- ☐ Physical/sexual development (e.g. menstruation or ejaculation)
- ☐ Masturbation
- ☐ Sexual intercourse
- ☐ His own sexual experiences
- ☐ None of these topics
- ☐ Not applicable to me

- 42. Which sexual topics do you think you could never talk about with your father (or step-father)?**
- ☐ Couple relationships – “namoro”
 - ☐ When to start having sex
 - ☐ Contraceptive methods in general
 - ☐ Condoms
 - ☐ STDs and HIV/AIDS
 - ☐ Pregnancy
 - ☐ Physical/sexual development (e.g. menstruation or ejaculation)
 - ☐ Masturbation
 - ☐ Sexual intercourse
 - ☐ His own sexual experiences
 - ☐ None, I could talk about all of these topics
 - ☐ Not applicable to me
- 43. How do you think your mother (or step-mother) feels about talking to you about sex?**
- ☐ Uncomfortable
 - ☐ Little comfortable
 - ☐ Very comfortable
 - ☐ She does not talk
 - ☐ Not applicable to me
- 44. How do you feel about talking about sex with your mother (or step-mother)?**
- ☐ Uncomfortable
 - ☐ Little comfortable
 - ☐ Very comfortable
 - ☐ I do not talk
 - ☐ Not applicable to me
- 45. How do you think your father (or step-father) feels about talking to you about sex?**
- ☐ Uncomfortable
 - ☐ Little comfortable
 - ☐ Very comfortable
 - ☐ He does not talk
 - ☐ Not applicable to me
- 46. How do you feel about talking about sex with your father (or step-father)?**
- ☐ Uncomfortable
 - ☐ Little comfortable
 - ☐ Very comfortable
 - ☐ I do not talk
 - ☐ Not applicable to me

47. In general, what do you think your mother (or step-mother) thinks about young people having sex?

- ☐ She does not think it is right at all
- ☐ She thinks that it is fine as long as young people are responsible and careful
- ☐ Absolutely fine, she has no problem with it
- ☐ Not applicable to me

48. In general, what do you think your father (or step-father) thinks about young people having sex?

- ☐ He does not think it is right at all
- ☐ He thinks that it is fine as long as young people are responsible and careful
- ☐ Absolutely fine, he has no problem with it
- ☐ Not applicable to me

SECTION 3: FRIENDS

49. Who are the friends with whom you socialise with most frequently?

Tick ✓ all the boxes that describe those who are part of your main group of friends

- ☐ Girls my age
- ☐ Girls older than me
- ☐ Boys my age
- ☐ Boys older than me

50. How frequent do you talk to your friends about things related to you?

- ☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

51. How frequent do you talk to your friends about topics related to sex?

- ☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

SECTION 4: PARENTS # 2

52. In the last seven days, did you see your parents touch each other affectionately?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I do not remember ☐ Not applicable to me

53. In the last seven days, did your mother (or step-mother) touch you affectionately?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I do not remember ☐ Not applicable to me

54. In the last seven days, did your father (or step-father) touch you affectionately?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I do not remember ☐ Not applicable to me

55. When you were a child (from about 5 to 8 years of age), did you ever see your mother (or step-mother) naked?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I do not remember ☐ Not applicable to me

56. Now at your age, do you tend to see your mother (or step-mother) naked?

- ☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Not applicable to me

57. When you were a child (from about 6 to 8 years of age), did you ever see your father (or step-father) naked?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I do not remember ☐ Not applicable to me

58. Now at your age, do you tend to see your father (or step-father) naked?

- ☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Not applicable to me

59. Have you ever seen any type of contraception in your home?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

60. Have you ever seen any educational books about sex in your home?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

61. Have you ever seen any sex magazines or sex videos in your home?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

62. In general, how comfortable do you think your mother (or step-mother) feels when something related to sex is shown on TV (e.g. a couple in a soap-opera kissing passionately)?

- ☐ Very comfortable, she does not seem to mind at all
☐ More or less, I think she would prefer if it did not happen
☐ Very uncomfortable, she really does not like it
☐ Not applicable to me

63. In general, how comfortable do you think your father (or step-father) feels when something related to sex is shown on TV?

- ☐ Very comfortable, he does not seem to mind at all
☐ More or less, I think he would prefer if it did not happen
☐ Very uncomfortable, he really does not like it
☐ Not applicable to me

SECTION 5: INFORMATION, KNOWLEDGE AND RISK

64. From which person or from where have you learnt most about sex?

Tick ✓ no more than 3 boxes

- ☐ Mother (or step-mother)
☐ Father (or step-father)
☐ Siblings
☐ Friends
☐ Boyfriend(s) or girlfriend(s)
☐ Other relatives
☐ Media: magazines, television, radio
☐ School
☐ Health services
☐ Church
☐ Other

65. From whom or where would you most like to learn about sex in the future?

Tick ✓ no more than 3 boxes

- ☐ Mother (or step-mother)
- ☐ Father (or step-father)
- ☐ Siblings
- ☐ Friends
- ☐ Boyfriend(s) or girlfriend(s)
- ☐ Other relatives
- ☐ Media: magazines, television, radio
- ☐ School
- ☐ Health services
- ☐ Church
- ☐ Other

66. Have you ever seen a condom?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

67. Are the following true or false?

People are less likely to catch a disease when having sex if...

	True	False	I am not sure
1) they use a condom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2) they choose a sexual partner that looks healthy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3) they take the contraceptive pill	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4) they take antibiotics before having sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5) they have sex with someone they know well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

68. Are the following true or false?

A girl is unlikely to get pregnant if...

	True	False	I am not sure
1) her partner uses a condom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2) she is having sex for the first time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3) she takes the contraceptive pill	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4) her partner removes his penis from her vagina before ejaculation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5) she has sex with someone she knows well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

69. What do you think is your risk of getting HIV/AIDS?

- ☐ None
- ☐ Little
- ☐ Medium
- ☐ Great

SECTION 6: NORMS AND SEXUAL ATTITUDES

70. Do young people your age have romantic relationships – “namora”?

- ☐ No ☐ Few ☐ Some ☐ Most

71. Do young people your age have sexual Intercourse?

- ☐ No ☐ Few ☐ Some ☐ Most

72. How frequently do you think young people your age use condoms during sexual Intercourse?

- ☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

73. Do you agree or not?

	Yes	No
1) It is wrong for a girl to have sex before marriage.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2) It is wrong for a boy to have sex before marriage.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3) A girl should have plenty of sexual experiences before she marries.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4) A boy should have plenty of sexual experiences before he marries.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5) It is bad using condoms because they take away the pleasure from sex.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6) One cannot trust condoms because they break.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 7: SEXUAL EXPERIENCE

74. Have you ever “got off” – “ficar” - with someone?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

75. Have you ever had a girlfriend or boyfriend?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

76. Have you ever had sexual Intercourse?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

The next group of questions ask about your first sexual intercourse

77. How old were you the first time you had sexual Intercourse?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12 and below | <input type="checkbox"/> 17 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13 | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 14 | <input type="checkbox"/> 19 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 or more |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> I have never had sexual intercourse |

78. How old do you think the person you had your first sexual Intercourse with was?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13 and below | <input type="checkbox"/> 19 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 14 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 21 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 22 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 17 | <input type="checkbox"/> 23 and above |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> I have never had sexual intercourse |

79. Who was the person you had your first sexual intercourse with?

- ☐ We had just met for the first time
- ☐ We had recently met
- ☐ We had known each other for a while
- ☐ Boyfriend or girlfriend (we had a steady relationship at the time)
- ☐ Fiancé
- ☐ Husband/Wife
- ☐ Cousin
- ☐ Another relative
- ☐ Female or male prostitute
- ☐ Other
- ☐ I have never had sexual intercourse

80. The first time you had sexual intercourse was any contraceptive method used?

If more than one contraceptive method was used, tick ✓ each of the ones used.

- ☐ No
- ☐ Condom
- ☐ The pill
- ☐ Withdrawal (penis was removed from vagina before ejaculation)
- ☐ Another method was used
- ☐ I do not know
- ☐ I have never had sexual intercourse

81. Why was that method used the first time you had sexual intercourse?

If there was more than one reason, tick ✓ all that apply

- ☐ To protect against STIs/AIDS
- ☐ To protect against pregnancy
- ☐ No method was used
- ☐ I have never had sexual intercourse

82. The first time you had sexual intercourse, which of the following was true?

- ☐ I forced my partner to have sex with me
- ☐ I had to persuade my partner to have sex with me
- ☐ We were both willing to have sex
- ☐ My partner had to persuade me to have sex with him/her
- ☐ My partner forced me to have sex with him/her
- ☐ I have never had sexual intercourse

83. Why did you have your first sexual intercourse when you did? Tick ✓the main reason.

- ☐ I was curious
- ☐ I was in love
- ☐ It wanted to lose my virginity
- ☐ It was the natural progression in the relationship
- ☐ Most people my age seemed to be doing it
- ☐ It just happened
- ☐ I wanted to please my partner
- ☐ I was drunk or high
- ☐ I was forced to
- ☐ I have never had sexual intercourse

84. Looking back now to the first time you had sexual intercourse, do you think it was the right time?

- ☐ No, too early
- ☐ No, too late
- ☐ Yes, about right
- ☐ I have never had sexual intercourse

The next group of questions ask about your most recent sexual intercourse

85. When did you last have sexual intercourse?

- ☐ Within last week
- ☐ Within last month
- ☐ Within last year
- ☐ More than a year ago
- ☐ I have never had sexual intercourse

86. The last time you had sexual intercourse, how old was the person you had sexual intercourse with?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13 and below | <input type="checkbox"/> 19 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 14 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 21 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 22 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 17 | <input type="checkbox"/> 23 and above |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> I have never had sexual intercourse |

87. Who was the person you had your last sexual Intercourse with?

- ☐ We had just met for the first time
- ☐ We had recently met
- ☐ We had known each other for a while
- ☐ Boyfriend or girlfriend (we had a steady relationship at the time)
- ☐ Fiancé
- ☐ Husband/Wife
- ☐ Cousin
- ☐ Another relative
- ☐ Female or male prostitute
- ☐ Other
- ☐ I have never had sexual intercourse

88. The last time you had sexual Intercourse, was any contraceptive method used?

If more than one contraceptive method was used, tick ✓ each of the ones used.

- ☐ No
- ☐ Condom
- ☐ The pill
- ☐ Withdrawal (penis was removed from vagina before ejaculation)
- ☐ Another method was used
- ☐ I do not know
- ☐ I have never had sexual intercourse

89. Why was that method used the last time you had sexual Intercourse?

If there was more than one reason, tick ✓ all that apply.

- ☐ To protect against STIs/AIDS
- ☐ To protect against pregnancy
- ☐ No method was used
- ☐ I have never had sexual intercourse

90. The last time you had sexual Intercourse, which of the following was true?

- ☐ I forced my partner to have sex with me
- ☐ I had to persuade my partner to have sex with me
- ☐ We were both willing to have sex
- ☐ My partner had to persuade me to have sex with him/her
- ☐ My partner forced me to have sex with him/her
- ☐ I have never had sexual intercourse

91. How many people have you had sexual intercourse with in the last year?

- ☐ 0
- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 or more
- ☐ I have never had sexual intercourse

92. How many people in total have you had sexual intercourse with?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 – 9
- ☐ 10 or more
- ☐ I have never had sexual intercourse

93. Have you ever been pregnant or made someone pregnant?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I have never had sexual intercourse

94. Is it easy to get condoms if you need some?

- ☐ Easy
- ☐ More or less
- ☐ Difficult
- ☐ I do not know

95. Have you (or your partner) ever used a condom?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

96. Do you know how to use a condom?

- ☐ Yes, definitely
- ☐ Yes, I think so
- ☐ No

97. Please tick ✓all the sexual topics that you have talked about with your current or most recent girlfriend/boyfriend.

- ☐ When to start having sex
- ☐ Contraception in general
- ☐ Condoms
- ☐ STDs and HIV/AIDS
- ☐ Pregnancy
- ☐ Menstruation
- ☐ Masturbation
- ☐ Sexual pleasure
- ☐ Sexual technique
- ☐ My own past sexual experiences
- ☐ His/her own past sexual experiences
- ☐ None of these topics
- ☐ I have never had a boyfriend/girlfriend

98. Please tick ✓all the sexual topics that you think you could never talk about with a boyfriend/girlfriend.

- ☐ When to start having sex
- ☐ Contraception in general
- ☐ Condoms
- ☐ STDs and HIV/AIDS
- ☐ Pregnancy
- ☐ Menstruation
- ☐ Masturbation
- ☐ Sexual pleasure
- ☐ Sexual technique
- ☐ My own past sexual experiences
- ☐ His/her own past sexual behaviours experiences
- ☐ None, I could talk about all of these topics

99. If your girlfriend/boyfriend wanted to have sex, but you did not want to, do you think you would be able to stop him/her?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Maybe, depends on partner or situation
- ☐ No

100. If you would like to have sex with your girlfriend/boyfriend, would you feel comfortable Initiating It?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Maybe, depends on partner or situation
- ☐ No

101. If you and your girlfriend/boyfriend desired to have sex, and you wanted to use a condom, would you be able to tell your partner?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Maybe, depends on partner or situation
- ☐ No

The End! Thank you for your participation!

6. Topic Guides used in the In-depth Interviews

Topic Guide for In-depth Interviews with Young People (English version)

List of topics to be discussed and examples of possible questions

1. General background of participant

Tell me about yourself...

Age: How old are you?

Place of birth and places lived so far: Where were you born? Where did you grow up? Where have you lived so far? When did you move to Samambaia?

School: What grade are you in? What is your school like? What do you think of your teachers? Do you like studying? How do you perform at school?

Future aspirations: What would you like to do when you are older? What kind of work would you like to do?

Hobbies: What are your hobbies? What do you like to do outside of school hours? Do you like sports or music?

Religion and Religiosity: Do you have a religion? What is your religion? Are you religious?

2. General description of household and of family

People in household: Who do you live with in your home? What is your home like? How many rooms are there in your home? What are the sleeping arrangements? Do you share a room with anyone?

Relationship status of parents: Do you live with both of your biological parents? Are your parents married, separated, or divorced?

Siblings: Do you have brothers or sisters? How many? How many are older and younger than you?

Work of parents: What does your father do? What does your mother do?

Income: Who earns money in your home? Who earns the most? Who is the main provider of money in your home?

Religion and Religiosity of family: Is your family religious? What is your parents' religion? Who is more religious?

Level of education of parents: What is your father's highest level of education? What is your mother's highest level of education?

3. Relationship with parents at present

Relationship with father and mother in general: Tell me about your mother and your father. What are they like? What is your relationship with your father and your mother like? Do you get along with them? Are you closer to your mother or your father? How do they treat you? Do they give you attention? Do you feel supported by them?

Time with parents: When, during the week, do you spend time with your father and mother? Are there fixed times in the day when you spend time with your parents, for example, meal times? Do you spend more time with your father or your mother?

Communication with parents in general: Do you talk to your parents about things that are going on in your life, for example, your school, friends, boyfriend/girlfriend? Does your father and mother listen to you? With which parent do you talk to the most?

Arguments: Do you quarrel with your mother and your father? How frequent is it? What do you argue about? How do you feel about it?

Affection: Are your parents affectionate towards you? Do they touch you affectionately, for example, give you a kiss or hug? Who is the most affectionate parent? How do you feel when they are affectionate towards you? Are you affectionate towards your parents? What do you think about being affectionate towards your parents?

4. Relationship with parents as a child – between ages 5 to 10, more or less

Relationship with father and mother in general: What was your relationship with your father and your mother like when you were a child? What memories do you have of your father and your mother when you were a child? What were they like? What did you think of them? Were you closer to your mother or your father as a child? In general, when you were a child, did you feel loved by your father and your mother or not? What do you think about the amount of attention they gave you?

Time with parents: With which parents did you spend more time with when you were a child? What was it like? What did you and your father do together when you were a child? Did he take you places? What was it like? Did he play with you? How do you feel about that? What did you and your mother do together when you were a child? Did she take you places? What was it like? Did she play with you? How do you feel about that?

A specific example: Tell me about something important that happened when you were a child (Give examples: when you went to school for the first time, learnt how to ride a bicycle, fought with someone, etc); OR tell me about something that you did wrong that you haven't forgotten. What happened exactly? How did your father and mother react? What did they say? How did you feel about their reaction? Did you feel supported by them?

General communication: With which parent did you talk to the most? Why was that the case? What did you talk about? Examples, please (Give examples to aid memory: during mealtimes; watching TV; when you got back from school or parents from work, etc.)

Arguments: Did your parents scold you when you were a child? Did you argue? Did they hit you? What was it like? Why did it happen? How did you feel about it?

Affection: Was your father and your mother affectionate towards you? What was that like? What do you think of the affection that you received from them?

5. Relationship between parents

Relationship between parents in general: Tell me about the relationship between your parents. Do they get along? How do they treat each other?

Time together: How much time do they spend with each other? When, during the week, do they spend time together? What do they enjoy doing together?

Communication in general: Do they talk to each other about things going on in their lives? Does one of them talk more than the other?

Arguments: Do they quarrel? How frequent is it? What do they quarrel about? How do you feel about it?

Affection: Are your parents affectionate towards each other? For example, do your parents hold hands, or kiss, or hug in front of you? How do you feel about it? Who is the most affectionate parent?

(Note: In the case of separated parents, ask about the separation/divorce – when and why it happened, how participant feels about it, etc. – and about their current relationship – are they still in touch? Do they get along? Then ask about their parents' current partners – if this is the case - following the topics above).

6. Gender roles in the home

Parental roles: What are your parents' roles in your home? Who is responsible for taking care of the house, bringing money home, and taking care of the children? Do your parents have different roles?

Young people: Do you have chores in your home? What are they? Do all siblings have chores? Is there a difference between boys and girls?

7. Parental monitoring and control

Strictness: Are your parents strict? How strict are they? Has this changed since you were a child? How? Are they fair?

Rules: Do you have rules to live by? Do your parents set rules? How are they enforced? Are they fair? Have these rules been broken? What about in terms of dating, are there any rules? Are the rules the same for men and women? Do parents treat sons and daughters equally?

Going out: When you go out, do you tell your parents where you are going? Do your parents let you go out with your friends at night? Is it the same for men and women? When was the last time you went out at night? Did you tell your parents where you were going? What did they say? What time did you return home?

8. Relationship with friends

Friends in general: Tell me about your friends. Who are your friends? Who are your closest friends? When and where did you meet them? How old are they? Do you have a best friend?

Time with friends: How often do you see your friends? Where do you meet them? Outside of school, do you spend time with your friends? Where and when?

Going out with friends: What do you most like doing with your friends? Do you go out at night with them? Where do you go? How late do you go out until?

General communication with friends: Do you talk to your friends about things that are going on in your lives, for example, your school and family? Do your friends listen to you? Do you feel they support you?

Alcohol and Drugs: Do your friends drink alcohol? When did they start drinking? Where do they drink? Do you drink with them? Do they take drugs? What do you think of young people drinking and taking drugs?

Comparison of relationship between parents and friends: How do you compare your relationship with your friends and your parents? Are you closer to one more than the other?

Opinion of parents of friends: What do your parents think about your friends? Have they ever complained about any of your friends? Have they shown concern about your friendships?

9. Sources of sexual information

Where young person learnt about sex: How have you found out about relationships, sex and contraception? Whom or what are the most important sources to you?

School: Have you ever learnt about sex at school? Have relationships, sex and/or contraception ever been spoken about at school? What do you think about the sex education that you have received at your school?

Media: How important is the media as a source of information? How do you feel about the messages given out? Have these messages influenced you in anyway?

Peers: Have you ever talked about sex with your friends? How often does it occur? What topics have you talked about? What are the conversations like?

10. Sexual knowledge and attitudes

Knowledge about risks: Does having sex have risks? Is it possible to prevent these risks?

Knowledge about STIs: Is it possible to get a disease from having sex? What diseases exist? What do you think of HIV/AIDS? How can you get HIV? Is it possible to prevent getting these diseases?

Knowledge about contraceptive methods: What kinds of contraceptive methods exist? What are they for? What do they do to prevent risk? What can a person do to prevent an unwanted pregnancy?

Attitudes about sex in general: What do you think about young people having sex? What do you think of young people having sex before they are married? Is it the same for boys and for girls?

Attitudes about contraceptive methods: What do you think about contraception? Should they be used? Who should be responsible for contraception?

Attitudes about condoms: What do you think about condoms? What are they for? What are their advantages and disadvantages? Who should be responsible for condoms? What do you think of boys and girls carrying condoms?

11. Perception of peer sexual attitudes and behaviour

Attitudes about sex in general: What do you think your friends think about young people having sex? What do you think they think of young people having sex before they are married? Is it the same for boys and for girls?

Attitudes about contraceptive methods: What do your friends think about contraception? Should they be used? Who should be responsible for contraception?

Attitudes about condoms: What do your friends think of condoms? What are they for? What are their advantages and disadvantages? Who should be responsible for condoms? What do they think of boys and girls carrying condoms?

Dating behaviour of friends: Do your friends "namora"? Do they "fica"? How old did they start to "namorar" and "ficar"?

Sexual behaviour of friends: Do your friends have sexual intercourse? How common is it? How old did they have their first sexual intercourse? What was the experience like for them? Was it right?

Use of contraceptives: Do your friends use any contraceptive method? What about condoms? How often are condoms used?

12. Perception of parental sexual attitudes

Attitudes about sex in general: What do you think your parents think about young people having sex? What do you think they think of young people having sex before they are married? Is it the same for boys and for girls?

Attitudes about contraceptive methods: What do your parents think about contraception? Should they be used? Who should be responsible for contraception?

Attitudes about condoms: What do your parents think of condoms? What are they for? What are their advantages and disadvantages? Who should be responsible for condoms? What do they think of boys and girls carrying condoms?

Reasons for parental attitudes: Why do you think your parents believe these things about sex?

13. Verbal communication with parents about sex

Communication about sex in general: Have your parents ever talked to you about sex or discussed any matters related to sex with you? If yes, what did you talk about? How was it talked about? Have you ever talked about puberty, virginity, sexual relationships, pregnancy, contraception, and STIs/AIDS with your parents? What did they say? Who initiated the conversation? Are there topics that are easier or more difficult to talk about?

Feelings when talking about sex: How do your parents feel talking about sex with you? Are they comfortable talking to you about sex? Why do you think they feel this way? How do you feel talking about sex with them? Are you comfortable talking to them about sex? Why?

Last conversation: When was the last time you talked to your parents about anything related to sex? Tell me about the conversation.

For females: When you had your first period, did you talk to your mother or your father about it? What did they say? *(If participant did not talk to one of their parents, ask with whom they learnt about menstruation and how they felt the first time).*

For males: When you had your first ejaculation, did you talk to your mother or your father about it? *(If participant did not talk to one of their parents, ask with whom they learnt about ejaculation and how they felt the first time).*

Communication adequate: What do you think about the information that you have exchanged with your parents? Is it adequate? Did you want to know more? Is it accurate?

Like to talk more? Would you like to have talked more to your parents about sex or not? Why haven't you talked more? What are the difficulties in talking to parents about sex?

Taboo topics: Are there certain topics that are more difficult to talk about or that you think you could never talk about with your parents? Which ones? Why? (Give examples to help: masturbation, orgasm, details of sexual experience of parents and young person).

Why parents don't talk: Why do you think your parents have never spoken to you about sex? Do you wish you could have talked to your parents about sex? What are the difficulties in talking to parents about sex?

14. Non-verbal communication with parents

Nudity of parents nowadays: How do your parents feel about showing their bodies? Nowadays, do you see your mother and your father naked? Do they change their clothes in front of you? When they have a bath, do they lock the bathroom? Tell me how they behave in relation to their body...

Nudity of parents when participant was a child: When you were a child, did you see your mother or your father naked? Did their behaviour change since you were a child?

Nudity of participant nowadays: Have any of your parents seen you naked recently? How do you feel changing or bathing in front of your parents? Tell me how you behave in relation to your body...

Nudity of participant as a child: Where you more comfortable when you were younger? When did this start to change? Has going through puberty changed your behaviour in terms of showing your body?

Pregnancy of mother: (For those that have younger siblings) Do you remember ever seeing your mother pregnant? If so, was she open about showing her stomach? Did she breastfeed in front of you? How open was she about that?

Sexual behaviour of parents: Have you ever been aware that your parents were having sex? If so, describe when, how and how you felt. Do you know if your parents use contraception? How do you know?

Sex-related "things" in the home: Have you ever seen things around in your home that are related to sex?

Have you ever seen sex education books?

Have you ever seen contraception, such as condoms?

Have you ever seen pornographic magazines or videos?

Have you ever seen sanitary napkins?

Where and when did you see it? Who did it belong too? How did you feel about it? What did you do with it?

Sex on TV: In general, how do your parents behave or react when anything sexual or related to sex is shown on TV? Are your parents comfortable watching couples on TV being sexual? For example, kissing passionately? How do they react? What does their behaviour tell you?

How do you feel and behave when a sex-related scene is shown on TV when your parents are present?

Last time watched TV with parents: Tell me about the last time you watched TV with your parents and a sex-related scene appeared... Tell me what happened exactly – who was there, did anyone leave the room at any time etc. How do you think your parents felt? How did you feel?

15. Sexual development

When did you first fall in love or experience romantic thoughts about someone?
When did you first become interested in boys/girls? How old were you?

Have you ever "ficar" with someone? Tell me about the first time... How old were you etc...

Have you ever "namorar" with someone? Tell me about the first time... How old were you etc...

Do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend right now? How long have you been together? Tell me about your current relationship...

Have you ever had sexual intercourse?

16. No sexual Intercourse - for those who have not had sexual Intercourse

Reason: Why have you not had sexual intercourse?

Feelings: How do you feel about not having had sex? Do you feel ready? Do you feel pressured not to have sex? Have you felt pressured to have sex?

Desires for first intercourse: When will the time be right for you? How would you like your first sexual intercourse to be? With whom? At what age? What stage in the relationship? Where?

Contraception: Do you plan to use contraception? Which type and why?

Other sexual practices: Have you ever given or received oral sex? What do you think about oral sex? Have you ever practised anal sex? What do you think about anal sex?

17. First sexual Intercourse

Describe your first sexual intercourse...

Age of participant and his/her partner: How old were you and your partner?

Who was partner? Who was the person? How did you meet? How long had you known him/her?

Where and how it happened: Where did it happen? Was it planned? How did it happen? Did you feel pressured to have sex in anyway?

Reason: Why did you decide to engage in first intercourse with him/her? Why did it happen that day?

Contraception: Was any method of contraception used? Was a condom used? Why was this method used? Where was the method obtained? Were there any reasons why contraception wasn't used or considered? How was this contraception usage/non-use decided?

Communication with partner: Did you talk to your partner about any previous sexual experiences? To what extent did you talk about having sex with your partner? Who lead the discussions? What was said? Were any risks considered or discussed? Who led the discussion? Did you find it easy to discuss the issue with your partner?

Feelings during: How did you feel during sexual intercourse? Was it a pleasurable experience?

Feelings afterwards: How did you feel after you had sexual intercourse for the first time? Was it the right time for you? What did you think about sex after your first intercourse?

Anyone found out? Did you tell anybody about your first experience? How did they react? Did anyone you didn't want to find out? How did they react? Did you fear that a specific person would find out? Who and why?

18. Sexual history

Number of sexual partners: Have you had more than one sexual partner? With how many people have you had sex with?

Who were they: How would you describe your relationships? Do they tend to be casual? Are they serious? How long have you generally known/seen your partner before sex?

Contraception: In general when you have sex, is any contraceptive method used? Which method and how frequent is it used? Who generally provides it/them? Whose responsibility is protection? From where do you typically obtain your protection?

Condoms: Have you ever used a condom during sex? What is it like using condoms? When have you not used condoms? Why wasn't it used?

Communication with partners: To what extent do negotiations about sex take place? Who leads the discussions? What is said? Have you found it easy to discuss the issue of contraception/protection with your partners? Have you talked to your partners about any previous sexual experiences?

19. Last sexual intercourse

Describe your last sexual intercourse...

Age of participant and his/her partner: How old were you and your partner?

Who was partner? Who was the person? How did you meet? How long had you known him/her?

Where and how it happened: Where did it happen? Was it planned? How did it happen? Did you feel pressured to have sex in anyway?

Reason: Why did you decide to have sex with him/her? Why did it happen that day?

Contraception: Was any method of contraception used? Was a condom used? Why was this method used? Where was the method obtained?

Were there any reasons why contraception wasn't used or considered? How was this contraception usage/non-use decided?

Communication with partner: Did you talk to your partner about any previous sexual experiences? To what extent did you talk about having sex with your partner? Who lead the discussions? What was said? Were any risks considered or discussed? Who led the discussion? Did you find it easy to discuss the issue with your partner?

Feelings during: How did you feel during sexual intercourse? Was it a pleasurable experience?

Feelings afterwards: How did you feel after you had sexual intercourse the last time?

20. Parental knowledge and attitudes regarding participants' sexual behaviour

Parents know? Do your parents know that you have had sex?

How did they find out? If they know, how did they find out? Who told them?

Any reaction? Did they react in anyway? Did they say anything to you? What was said?

Feelings about: How do you feel about them knowing or not knowing? Do what they think matter to you?

Topic Guide for In-depth Interview with Parents
(English version)

List of topics to be discussed and examples of possible questions

1. General background of parent and family

Tell me about yourself...

Age: How old are you?

Place of birth and places lived so far: Where were you born? Where did you grow up? Where have you lived so far? When did you move to Samambaia?

Marital status: Are you married?

Children: How many children do you have? What are their ages?

People in household: Who do you live with in your home? What is your home like? How many rooms are there in your home? What are the sleeping arrangements? Do you share a room with anyone?

School: What is your highest level of education?

Work: Do you work? What do you do? What does your husband/wife do?

Income: Who earns money in your home? Who earns the most? Who is the main provider of money in your home?

Religion and Religiosity: Do you have a religion? What is your religion? Are you religious? Is your wife/husband religious? Are your children religious?

2. Sources of sexual information and sex education in general

Where young person learn about sex: Where do you think young people get most of their information about sex?

School: What do you think of schools providing sex education to young people?

Media: What role does the media play in informing young people about sex? What do you think of the way the media portrays sex?

Peers: What do you think about young people talking about sex with their friends? Is the information young people obtain from friends adequate?

Who should educate? Should young people be taught about sex? Who should be responsible for teaching young people about sex? Do you think parents should talk to their children about sex?

3. Sexual attitudes and knowledge related to young people's sexual health

Attitudes about sex in general: What do you think about young people having sex? What do you think about young people having sex before they are married? Is it the same for boys and for girls? What do you think of young people who become parents? Why do you think young people are having sex earlier nowadays?

Attitudes related to risk: Are there risks that young people take when they have sex? What kind of risks do young people take when they have sex? Do men and women take the same or different risks? Do you think young people are aware that they are taking risks?

Attitudes about contraceptive methods: What do you think about contraception? Should they be used? What do you think of young people using contraception?

Attitudes about condoms: What do you think about condoms? What are their advantages and disadvantages? What do you think of boys and girls carrying condoms? Is it the same for young men and women?

Attitudes related to parental influence: Do you think parents can influence young people's sexual behaviour in anyway? Do you think parents are responsible for young people's sexual behaviour? What do you think of parents helping their children obtain contraception, such as condoms?

4. Relationship with son/daughter

Relationship in general: Tell me about your son/daughter. What is he/she like? What is your relationship with your son/daughter like? Do you get along? How does he/she treat you? Has your relationship changed over the years? How?

Time together: When, during the week, do you spend time with your son/daughter? Are there fixed times in the day when you spend time together, for example, meal times? What do you like to do together?

Communication in general: Do you talk to your son/daughter about things that are going on in your lives, for example, work, his/her school, friends? Who talks more? How are your conversations?

Arguments: Do you quarrel? How frequent is it? What do you argue about? How do you feel about it?

Affection: Do you give your son/daughter affection? For example, do you kiss or hug your son/daughter? Do you like being affectionate towards him/her? Has this changed in anyway since he/she was a child? Is your son/daughter affectionate towards you? Does he/she like giving you a hug or a kiss? Do you like receiving a hug or a kiss from your son/daughter? Who is more affectionate, you or your son/daughter?

Strictness: Are you a strict parent? Please give example. Has this changed since your son/daughter was a child?

Rules: Does your son/daughter have rules to live by? Are they the same for other young men or women in your home? How are they enforced? Have these rules been broken? How have the rules changed since your son/daughter was a child? Are there rules for dating?

Going out: When your son/daughter goes out, does he/she tell you where he/she is going? Do you let your son/daughter go out with his/her friends at night? Are they the same for other young men or women in your home? When was the last time your son/daughter went out at night? Where did he/she go and what time did he/she return home?

5. Friends of son/daughter

What do you think of your son/daughter's friends?
Do you think they are good friends to your son/daughter?
Do you have any concerns about your son/daughter's friendships?
Do you think they influence your son/daughter in anyway?

6. "Namoro" of son/daughter

How do you feel about your son/daughter dating? Do you encourage or discourage it? Do you feel the same way about your other children? Is this the same for young men and women?

Does your son/daughter have a boyfriend/girlfriend at the moment? Have you met your son/daughter's girlfriend/boyfriend? If yes, what do you think of her/him and of their relationship? Do you have any concerns about the relationship? *(If parents do not know about a current relationship, ask about the most recent one. If they do not know about any, move on to the next topic).*

7. Experience of verbal sexual communication

Experience of sexual communication with own parents: When you were a child and an adolescent, did you ever talk about sex with your own parents? Did they ever talk to you about puberty, sexual relationships, or pregnancy? What did they say? How was it said? What were their attitudes about sex? If they didn't talk, why not?

Communication about sex in general: Have you ever talked to your son/daughter about sex? Have you ever talked about puberty, virginity, sexual relationships, pregnancy, contraception, and STIs/AIDS with your son/daughter? If yes, what have you talked about? How was it talked about? Who initiated the conversation? Are there certain topics that are easier or more difficult to talk about than others? Do you think that it is different talking to young men than women about sex?

Feelings when talking about sex: How do you feel talking about sex with your son/daughter? Are you comfortable talking to him/her about sex? Why? How does your son/daughter feel? Is he/she comfortable talking about sex? Why do you think he/she feel this way?

Last conversation: When was the last time you talked to your son/daughter about anything related to sex? Tell me about the conversation...

For those with daughter: Did you ever talk to your daughter about menstruation? What happened when she had her first period? Did you know about it? Did you talk to her about it?

For those with son: Did you ever talk to your son about ejaculation? Did he ever tell you about his first ejaculation? Tell me about the conversation.

Like to talk more? Would you like to have talked more or not to your son/daughter about sex? Why haven't you talked more? What are the difficulties of talking to your son/daughter about sex?

Taboo topics: Are there certain topics that are more difficult to talk about or that you think you could never talk about with your son/daughter? Which ones? Why? (Give examples to help: masturbation, orgasm, details of sexual experience of parents and young person).

Why parents don't talk: Why have you never spoken about sex with your son/daughter? Do you wish you could have talked or could talk to your daughter about sex? What are the difficulties of talking to your son/daughter about sex?

8. Non-verbal communication with son/daughter

Puberty of son/daughter: How did you feel when your son/daughter started going through puberty? Did your relationship change? Did you start having more or less concerns about your son/daughter?

Nudity of parent nowadays: How do you feel about showing your naked body? Has your son/daughter seen you naked recently? Do you get changed in front of your son/daughter? Tell me how you behave in relation to your body...

Nudity of parent when participant was a child: When your son/daughter was child, did he/she see you naked? How did you feel about it then? Have things changed? Why?

Nudity of participant nowadays: Have you seen your son/daughter naked recently? How does your son/daughter feel about showing his/her body? Does he/she get changed in front of you?

When he/she has a bath, does he/she lock the bathroom? Tell me how he/she behaves in relation to his/her body...

Nudity of participant as a child: How has this changed since he/she was a child? When did it start to change and why?

Sex on TV: In general, how do you feel when anything sexual or related to sex is shown on TV? Are you comfortable watching couples on TV being sexual, for example kissing passionately? Do you feel the same way when your son/daughter is present? How does your son/daughter react and behave? Does their behaviour tell you anything?

Last time watched TV with son/daughter: Tell me about the last time you watched TV with your son/daughter and a sex-related scene appeared... Tell me what happened exactly – who was there, did anyone leave the room at any time etc. How do you think your son/daughter felt? How did you feel?

9. For mothers...

Pregnancy of mother: Did you ever breastfeed any of your children? Were you comfortable breastfeeding in front of other people?

Menstruation-related products: Where do you keep your menstruation related products (for example, sanitary napkins)? Do you keep them in a place where no one can see or do you not care where you leave them? Does your son/daughter know where they are kept?

10. Gender roles in the home

Parental roles: What is your role in your home? Is this the same for your husband/wife? In general in your home, do you and your husband have different roles and responsibilities? What are they? Are one of you more responsible for taking care of the home and taking care of the children?

Young people: Does your son/daughter have responsibilities and chores to do in the home? What are they? Do all siblings have chores? Is there a difference between boys and girls?

11. Relationship between parents

Relationship between parents in general: Tell me about your relationship with your husband/wife or current partner? Do you get along? How does he/she treat you? How has your relationship changed over the years?

Time together: When, during the week, do you spend time together? What do you like doing together?

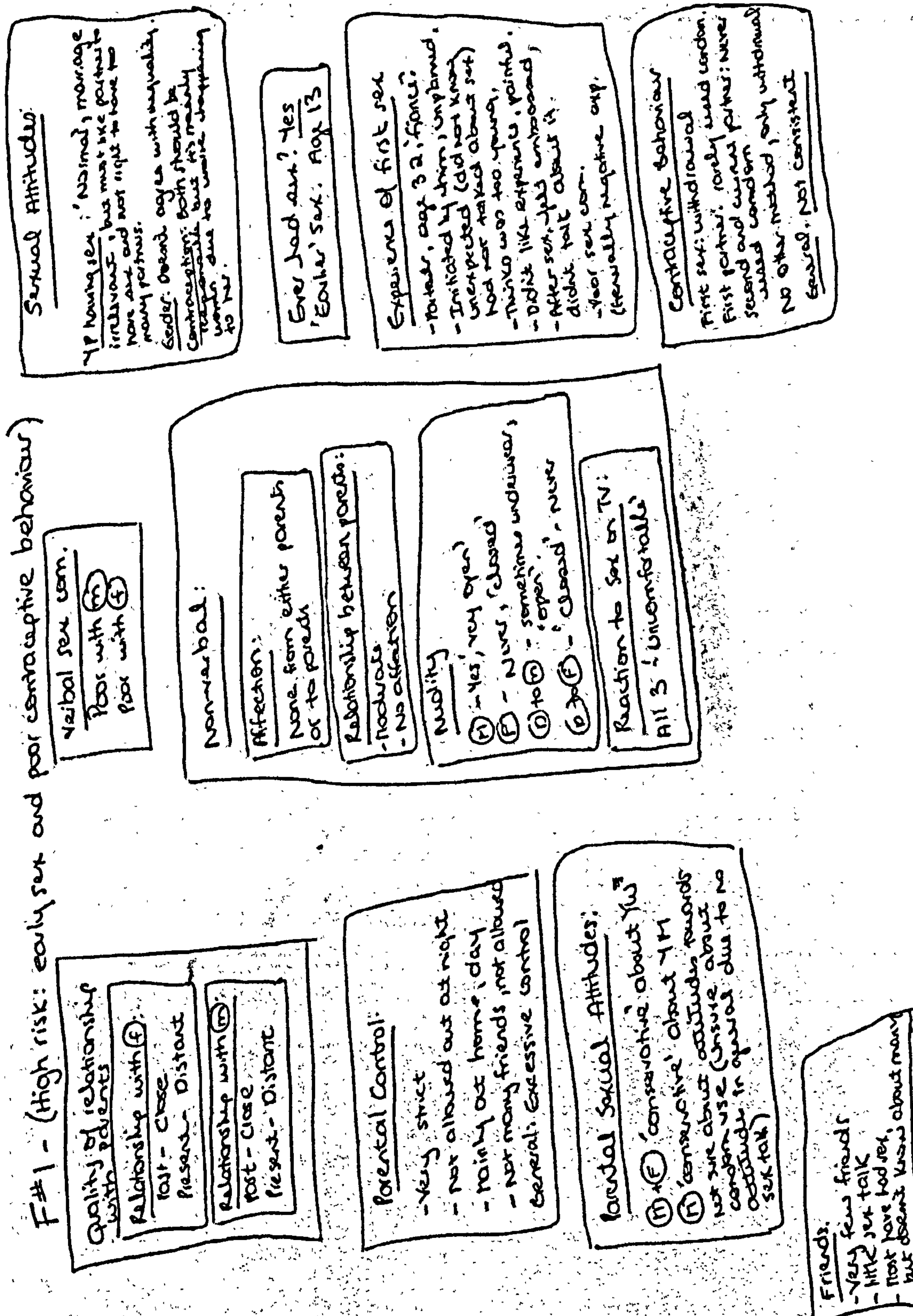
Communication in general: Do you talk about things that happen in your lives, for example, at work and in the family? Who talks more? What are your conversations like?

Arguments: Do you quarrel? How frequent is it? What do you quarrel about? How do you feel about it?

Affection: Are you affectionate towards each other? For example, do you hold hands, or kiss, or hug? How frequent is that? Who is more affectionate? Has this changed over the years? Are you affectionate towards each other in front of your son/daughter? How do you feel about showing affection in front of him/her? Why?

(Note: In the case of separated parents, ask about the separation/divorce – when and why it happened, how participant feels about it, etc. – and about their current relationship – are they still in touch? Do they get along?. Then ask about their current partners – if this is the case – , following the topics above).

7. Example of 'Family Map' used in the Analysis of In-depth Interviews



Appendix: Chapter 7

Table 7.1.1 List of the Parental Influence, Parental Demographic, Peer and Control Variables Selected for the Logistic Regression Analysis

Parental Influence Variables		Parental Demographic and Peer Variables	Control Variables*
1 – Extent of sex talk with mother	14 – Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with father	1 – Level of education of mother	1 – Age
2 – Talked about condoms with mother	15 – Talked about pregnancy with father	2 – Religiosity of mother	2 – Level at school
3 – Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with mother	16 – Number of sex topics that could never be talked about with father	3 – Level of education of father	3 – Religiosity of young person
4 – Talked about pregnancy with mother	17 – Strictness of father	4 – Religiosity of father	4 – Parental structure at home
5 – Number of sex topics that could never be talked about with mother	18 – Father’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV	5 – Extent of sex talk with peers	5 – Age at first sex
6 – Strictness of mother	19 – Affection from father in last seven days	6 – Perception of peers having sex	6 – Ever had sex
7 – Mother’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV	20 – Nudity of father nowadays	7 – Perception of peers using condoms	7 – Partner at first sex
8 – Affection from mother in last seven days	21 – Quality of relationship with father		
9 – Nudity of mother nowadays	22 – Father’s sexual attitude		
10 – Quality of relationship with mother	23 – Affection between parents in the last seven days		
11 – Mother’s sexual attitude	24 – Quality of relationship between parents		
12 – Extent of sex talk with father	25 – Allowed out by parents at night		
13 – Talked about condoms with father			

*The first 4 control variables were included in all the regression models, except that ‘age at first sex’ was used instead of ‘age’ in the regression models examining ‘condom use at first intercourse’. ‘Ever had sex’ was also included as a control variable in the regression models of ‘low sexual knowledge’ and ‘liberal sexual attitudes’ and ‘partner at first sex’ was included in the models of ‘condom use at first intercourse’.

Table 7.1.2 Young Men Having ‘Low’ Sexual Knowledge: Variables Included in the Logistic Regression Model Building Process and Final Model

Parental Influence Variables with a P Value < 0.25	Parental Influence Variables Included in Initial Model After Checking for Correlations	Parental Demographic and Peer Variables with a P Value < 0.25	Control Variables	Final Model (only significant and control variables)
Extent of sex talk with mother	Extent of sex talk with mother			Extent of sex talk with mother
Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with mother				
Talked about pregnancy with mother				
Talked about condoms with father	Talked about condoms with father			
Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with father				
Talked about pregnancy with father				
Allowed out by parents at night	Allowed out by parents at night			Parents allow to go out at night
		Level of education of mother		
		Level of education of father		
		Religiosity of father		
		Extent of sex talk with peers		
		Perception of peers using condoms		
			Ever had sex	Ever had sex
			Age	Age
			Level at school	Level at school
			Religiosity of young person	Religiosity of young person
			Family Structure	Family Structure

Table 7.1.3 Young Women Having ‘Low’ Sexual Knowledge: Variables Included in the Logistic Regression Model Building Process and Final Model

Parental Influence Variables with a P Value < 0.25	Parental Influence Variables Included in Initial Model After Checking for Correlations	Parental Demographic and Peer Variables with a P Value < 0.25	Control Variables	Final Model (only significant and control variables)
Extent of sex talk with mother				
Talked about condoms with mother				
Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with mother	Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with mother			Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with mother
Number of sex topics that could never be talked about with mother	Number of sex topics that could never be talked about with mother			
Quality of relationship with father	Quality of relationship with father			
Allowed out by parents at night	Allowed out by parents at night			
		Level of education of mother		Level of education of mother
		Level of education of father		Level of education of father
		Perception of peers having sex		
		Perception of peers using condoms		
			Ever had sex	Ever had sex
			Age	Age
			Level at school	Level at school
			Religiosity of young person	Religiosity of young person
			Family Structure	Family Structure

Table 7.1.4 Young Men Having ‘Liberal’ Sexual Attitudes: Variables Included in the Logistic Regression Model Building Process and Final Model

Parental Influence Variables with a P Value < 0.25	Parental Influence Variables Included In Initial Model After Checking for Correlations	Parental Demographic and Peer Variables with a P Value < 0.25	Control Variables	Final Model (only significant and control variables)
Talked about condoms with mother	Talked about condoms with mother			
Number of sex topics that could never be talked about with mother	Number of sex topics that could never be talked about with mother			
Strictness of mother	Strictness of mother			
Mother’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV	Mother’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV			
Quality of relationship with mother	Quality of relationship with mother			
Mother’s sexual attitude	Mother’s sexual attitude			Mother’s sexual attitude
Extent of sex talk with father	Extent of sex talk with father			Extent of sex talk with father
Talked about condoms with father				
Strictness of father				
Father’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV	Father’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV			Father’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV
Father’s sexual attitude				
		Religiosity of mother		
		Religiosity of father		
		Extent of sex talk with peers		
		Perception of peers having sex		
			Ever had sex	Ever had sex
			Age	Age
			Level at school	Level at school
			Religiosity of young person	Religiosity of young person
			Family Structure	Family Structure

Table 7.1.5 Young Women Having ‘Liberal’ Sexual Attitudes: Variables Included in the Logistic Regression Model Building Process and Final Model

Parental Influence Variables with a P Value < 0.25	Parental Influence Variables Included in Initial Model After Checking for Correlations	Parental Demographic and Peer Variables with a P Value < 0.25	Control Variables	Final Model (only significant and control variables)
Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with mother	Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with mother			
Number of sex topics that could never be talked about with mother	Number of sex topics that could never be talked about with mother			
Mother’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV	Mother’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV			
Quality of relationship with mother	Quality of relationship with mother			Quality of relationship with mother
Mother’s sexual attitude	Mother’s sexual attitude			Mother’s sexual attitude
Number of sex topics that could never be talked about with father	Number of sex topics that could never be talked about with father			
Father’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV	Father’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV			Father’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV
Father’s sexual attitude				
Quality of relationship between parents				
		Religiosity of mother		
		Religiosity of father		
		Level of education of father		Level of education of father
		Extent of sex talk with peers		Extent of sex talk with peers
		Perception of peers having sex		
		Perception of peers using condoms		
			Ever had sex	Ever had sex
			Age	Age
			Level at school	Level at school
			Religiosity of young person	Religiosity of young person
			Family Structure	Family Structure

Table 7.1.6 Young Men Having ‘Early’ Sex: Variables Included in the Logistic Regression Model Building Process and Final Model

Parental Influence Variables with a P Value < 0.25	Parental Influence Variables Included In Initial Model After Checking for Correlations	Parental Demographic and Peer Variables with a P Value < 0.25	Control Variables	Final Model (only significant and control variables)
Quality of relationship with mother	Quality of relationship with mother			
Mother’s sexual attitude	Mother’s sexual attitude			Mother’s sexual attitude
Father’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV				
Quality of relationship with father	Quality of relationship with father			Quality of relationship with father
Father’s sexual attitude				
		Religiosity of father		
		Extent of sex talk with peers		
		Perception of peers having sex		Perception of peers having sex
			Age	Age
			Level at school	Level at school
			Religiosity of young person	Religiosity of young person
			Family Structure	Family Structure

Table 7.1.7 Young Women Having ‘Early’ Sex: Variables Included in the Logistic Regression Model Building Process and Final Model

Parental Influence Variables with a P Value < 0.25	Parental Influence Variables Included In Initial Model After Checking for Correlations	Parental Demographic and Peer Variables with a P Value < 0.25	Control Variables	Final Model (only significant and control variables)
Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with mother	Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with mother			
Number of sex topics that could never be talked about with mother	Number of sex topics that could never be talked about with mother			Number of sex topics that could never be talked about with mother
Strictness of mother	Strictness of mother			
Quality of relationship with mother				
Extent of sex talk with father				
Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with father				
Talked about pregnancy with father				
Strictness of father	Strictness of father			Strictness of father
Father’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV				
Quality of relationship with father				
Father’s sexual attitude				
Quality of relationship between parents				
Allowed out by parents at night	Allowed out by parents at night			Allowed out by parents at night
		Religiosity of mother		
		Religiosity of father		Religiosity of father
		Extent of sex talk with peers		
			Age	Age
			Level at school	Level at school
			Religiosity of young person	Religiosity of young person
			Family Structure	Family Structure

Table 7.1.8 Condom Use at Young Men’s First Intercourse: Variables Included in the Logistic Regression Model Building Process and Final Model

Parental Influence Variables with a P Value < 0.25	Parental Influence Variables Included in Initial Model After Checking for Correlations	Parental Demographic and Peer Variables with a P Value < 0.25	Control Variables	Final Model (only significant and control variables)
Talked about condoms with mother				
Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with mother	Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with mother			Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with mother
Strictness of mother	Strictness of mother			
Mother’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV	Mother’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV			
Extent of sex talk with father	Extent of sex talk with father			
Talked about STIs and HIV/AIDS with father				
Strictness of father				
Father’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV	Father’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV			Father’s non-verbal feelings towards sex-related scene on TV
Quality of relationship with father				
Allowed out by parents at night	Allowed out by parents at night			Allowed out by parents at night
		Level of education of father		
		Perception of peers using condoms		
			Partner at first sex	Partner at first sex
			Age at first sex	Age at first sex
			Level at school	Level at school
			Religiosity of young person	Religiosity of young person
			Family Structure	Family Structure

Table 7.1.9 Condom Use at Young Women's First Intercourse: Variables Included in the Logistic Regression Model Building Process and Final Model

Parental Influence Variables with a P Value < 0.25	Parental Influence Variables Included in Initial Model After Checking for Correlations	Parental Demographic and Peer Variables with a P Value < 0.25	Control Variables	Final Model (only significant and control variables)
Extent of sex talk with father	Extent of sex talk with father			Extent of sex talk with father
Talked about pregnancy with father				
Strictness of father				
		Religiosity of father		Religiosity of father
		Perception of peers having sex		Perception of peers having sex
			Partner at first sex	Partner at first sex
			Age at first sex	Age at first sex
			Level at school	Level at school
			Religiosity of young person	Religiosity of young person
			Family Structure	Family Structure

Appendix: Chapter 8

Table 8.1.1 Experience of Verbal Sexual Communication with Each Parent of the Young Men Interviewed

Young Men's Experience of Verbal Sexual Communication					
With Mother*			With Father or Step-father**		
Good	Moderate	Poor	Good	Moderate	Poor
M#2	M#5♥	M#1	M#3	M#1	M#4
M#9	M#6	M#4	M#8♥	M#5♥	M#6
M#17	M#7	M#8	M#13	M#16	M#7
	M#12	M#10			M#9
	M#13	M#11			M#10
		M#14			M#11
		M#15			M#14
		M#16			M#15
		M#18			M#17
					M#18

*Male with no present relationship with his mother: M#3
**Males with no present relationship with their fathers: M#2, M#12
♥Verbal sexual communication was poor in past, recently improved.

Table 8.1.2 Experience of Verbal Sexual Communication with Each Parent of the Young Women Interviewed

Young Women's Experience of Verbal Sexual Communication					
With Mother			With Father or Step-father**		
Good	Moderate	Poor	Good	Moderate	Poor
F#2		F#1			F#1
F#3		F#4			F#2
F#11		F#5			F#4
F#12		F#6			F#5
F#17		F#7			F#6
		F#8			F#7
		F#9			F#8
		F#10			F#9
		F#13			F#10
		F#14			F#11
		F#15			F#12
		F#16			F#13
		F#18			F#14
					F#15
					F#16
					F#17
					F#18

**Female with no present relationship with her father: F#3

Table 8.1.3 Experience of Parental Control of the Young Men and Women Interviewed

Parental Control					
Young Men			Young Women		
<i>Excessive</i>	<i>Balanced</i>	<i>Lack</i>	<i>Excessive</i>	<i>Balanced</i>	<i>Lack</i>
	M#1	M#5	F#1	F#3	F#2
	M#2	M#6	F#5	F#4	F#8
	M#3	M#10	F#7	F#6	F#14
	M#4	M#12	F#10	F#9	F#18
	M#7	M#14		F#11	
	M#8♥	M#15		F#12	
	M#9	M#16		F#13	
	M#11			F#15	
	M#13			F#16	
	M#17			F#17	
	M#18				

♥Parental control used to lack a few years ago, when he first had sex.

Table 8.1.4 Young Men’s Parental Non-Verbal Reactions to Sexual Scenes on TV

Young Men’s Parental Non-Verbal Reactions to Sexual Scenes on TV					
Mother			Father and Step-Father**		
<i>Comfortable</i>	<i>Uncomfortable</i>	<i>Very Uncomfortable</i>	<i>Comfortable</i>	<i>Uncomfortable</i>	<i>Very Uncomfortable</i>
M#2	M#1	M#8	M#3	M#1	M#5
M#6	M#4	M#9	M#7	M#4	M#11
M#7	M#5	M#11	M#13	M#8	M#15
M#10		M#14	M#17		M#16
M#12		M#15			M#18
		M#16			
		M#17			
		M#18			

*Male with no present relationship with his mother or no information: M#3, M#13

**Males with no present relationship with their fathers, who do not watch TV with them, or no information: M#2, M#6, M#9, M#10, M#12, M#14

Table 8.1.5 Young Women’s Parental Non-Verbal Reactions to Sexual Scenes on TV

Young Women’s Parental Non-Verbal Reactions to Sexual Scenes on TV					
Mother			Father and Step-Father**		
<i>Comfortable</i>	<i>Uncomfortable</i>	<i>Very Uncomfortable</i>	<i>Comfortable</i>	<i>Uncomfortable</i>	<i>Very Uncomfortable</i>
F#2	F#1	F#9	F#8	F#1	F#2
F#3	F#4	F#10	F#11	F#5	F#4
F#8	F#5		F#14	F#15	F#6
F#11	F#6			F#18	F#7
F#12	F#7				F#9
F#13	F#14				F#10
F#16	F#15				
	F#17				
	F#18				

**Females with no present relationship with their fathers, who do not watch TV with them or no information: F#3, F#12, F#13, F#16, F#17.

**Table 8.1.6 Physical Affection between Parents and the Young Men
Interviewed**

Physical Affection From Parents to Young Men			
Mother*		Father and Step-Father**	
Yes	None/Very Rarely	Yes	None/Very Rarely
M#1	M#6	M#1	M#7
M#2	M#7	M#3	M#9
M#4	M#14	M#5	M#10
M#5		M#8	M#11
M#8		M#13	M#14
M#9			M#15
M#10			M#16
M#11			M#17
M#12			M#18
M#13			
M#15			
M#16			
M#17			
M#18			

Physical Affection From Young Men to Parents			
Mother*		Father and Step-Father**	
Yes	None/Very Rarely	Yes	None/Very Rarely
M#1	M#6	M#1	M#7
M#2	M#7	M#3	M#9
M#4	M#12	M#5	M#10
M#5	M#14	M#8	M#14
M#8		M#11	M#15
M#9		M#13	M#16
M#10			M#17
M#11			M#18
M#13			
M#15			
M#16			
M#17			
M#18			

*Male with no present relationship with his mother: M#3

**Males with no present relationship with their fathers or no data: M#2, M#4, M#6,M#12,

**Table 8.1.7 Physical Affection between Parents and the Young Women
Interviewed**

Physical Affection From Parents to Young Women			
Mother		Father and Step-Father**	
Yes	None/Very Rarely	Yes	None/Very Rarely
F#2	F#1	F#8	F#1
F#3	F#4	F#11	F#2
F#6	F#5	F#15	F#4
F#7	F#9	F#18	F#5
F#8	F#10		F#6
F#11	F#12		F#7
F#15	F#13		F#8
F#18	F#14		F#9
	F#16		F#10
	F#17		F#12
			F#13
			F#14
			F#16
			F#17

Physical Affection From Young Women to Parents			
Mother		Father and Step-Father**	
Yes	None/Very Rarely	Yes	None/Very Rarely
F#2	F#1	F#9	F#1
F#3	F#4	F#11	F#2
F#7	F#5	F#18	F#4
F#9	F#6		F#5
F#11	F#8		F#6
F#18	F#10		F#7
	F#12		F#8
	F#13		F#10
	F#14		F#12
	F#15		F#13
	F#16		F#14
	F#17		F#15
			F#16
			F#17

**Female with no present relationship with her father: F#3

Table 8.1.8 Openness of Nudity in the Home of the Young Men Interviewed

Parental Nudity In Front of Young Men					
Mother*			Father and Step-Father**		
Very Open	Open	Closed	Very Open	Open	Closed
M#2	M#4	M#1	M#1	M#17	M#7
M#6	M#5	M#7	M#3		M#8
M#12	M#10	M#8	M#4		M#9
M#13	M#16	M#9	M#5		M#10
M#17		M#11	M#13		M#11
		M#14			M#15
		M#15			M#16
		M#18			M#18
Nudity of Young Men In Front of Parents***					
Mother*			Father and Step-Father**		
Very Open	Open	Closed	Very Open	Open	Closed
M#2	M#4	M#1	M#5	M#4	M#1
M#6	M#10	M#5	M#13	M#17	M#7
M#13		M#7	M#16		M#8
M#18		M#8	M#18		M#9
		M#9			M#10
		M#11			M#15
		M#12			
		M#14			
		M#15			
		M#16			
		M#17			

*Male with no present relationship with his mother: M#3
**Males with no present relationship with their fathers or who do not live with them: M#2, M#6, M#12, M#14, M#17
***No data: M#3

Table 8.1.9 Openness of Nudity in the Home of the Young Women Interviewed

Parental Nudity In Front of Young Women					
Mother			Father and Step-Father**		
<i>Very Open</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>Closed</i>	<i>Very Open</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>Closed</i>
F#1	F#2	F#10	F#16	F#5	F#1
F#4	F#3	F#11			F#2
F#5	F#7				F#4
F#6	F#9				F#6
F#8	F#12				F#7
F#13	F#14				F#8
F#16	F#15				F#9
F#17					F#10
F#18					F#11
					F#12
					F#14
					F#15
					F#17
					F#18

Nudity of Young Women In Front of Parents					
Mother			Father and Step-Father**		
<i>Very Open</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>Closed</i>	<i>Very Open</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>Closed</i>
F#4	F#1	F#2		F#5	F#1
F#5	F#3	F#10			F#2
F#8	F#6	F#12			F#4
F#13	F#7	F#15			F#6
F#14	F#9	F#16			F#7
F#18	F#11				F#8
	F#17				F#9
					F#10
					F#11
					F#12
					F#14
					F#15
					F#16
					F#17
					F#18

**Females with no present relationship with their fathers or who do not live with them: F#3, F#13

Table 8.1.10 Quality of Relationship Between Parents of the Young People Interviewed

Quality of Relationship Between Parents					
Young Men			Young Women		
<i>Good</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Poor</i>
M#4	M#1	M#2		F#1	F#2
M#7	M#5	M#3		F#9	F#3
M#11	M#9	M#6		F#10	F#4
		M#8		F#11	F#5
		M#10			F#6
		M#12			F#7
		M#13			F#8
		M#14			F#12
		M#15			F#13
		M#16			F#14
		M#17			F#15
		M#18			F#16
					F#17
					F#18

Table 8.1.11 Quality of Relationship with Each Parent of the Young Men Interviewed

Young Men's Quality of Relationship			
With Mother*		With Father or Step-Father**	
<i>Close</i>	<i>Distant</i>	<i>Close</i>	<i>Distant</i>
M#2	M#1	M#1	M#5
M#4	M#5	M#3	M#6
M#7	M#6	M#4	M#7
M#9	M#8	M#8♥	M#10
M#11	M#10	M#9	M#14
M#13	M#12	M#11	M#15
M#17	M#14	M#13	M#16
M#18	M#15		M#17
	M#16		M#18

*Male with no present relationship with his mother: M#3
**Males with no present relationship with their fathers: M#2, M#12
♥M#8, close to his father today, but distant when he first had sex..

Table 8.1.12 Quality of Relationship with Each Parent of the Young Women Interviewed

Young Men's Quality of Relationship			
With Mother*		With Father or Step-Father**	
<i>Close</i>	<i>Distant</i>	<i>Close</i>	<i>Distant</i>
F#2	F#1	F#2	F#1
F#3	F#4	F#8	F#4
F#8	F#5		F#5
F#11	F#6		F#6
F#12	F#7		F#7
F#18	F#9		F#9
	F#10		F#10
	F#13		F#11
	F#14		F#12
	F#15		F#13
	F#16		F#14
	F#17		F#15
			F#16
			F#17
			F#18

**Female with no present relationship with her father: F#3

Table 8.1.13 Parental Sexual Attitudes towards Males Having Sex as Reported by the Young Men Interviewed

Parental Sexual Attitudes towards Males Having Sex as Reported by the Young Men***					
Mother*			Father or Step-Father**		
Liberal	Conservative	Unsure	Liberal	Conservative	Unsure
M#2	M#1		M#1	M#8	M#9
M#5	M#8		M#3	M#15	M#10
M#6	M#9		M#5		M#17
M#7	M#15		M#6		
M#10	M#17		M#7		
M#11	M#18		M#11		
M#12			M#13		
M#13			M#14		
M#14			M#16		
M#16			M#18		

*Male with no present relationship with his mother: M#3
**Males with no present relationship with their fathers or no data: M#2, M#6, M#12
***M#4 not included due to insufficient data on his perception of his parents' sexual attitudes

Table 8.1.14 Parental Sexual Attitudes towards Females Having Sex as Reported by the Young Women Interviewed

Parental Sexual Attitudes towards Females Having Sex as Reported by the Young Women ***					
Mother			Father or Step-Father**		
Liberal	Conservative	Unsure	Liberal	Conservative	Unsure
F#2	F#1	F#16	F#2	F#1	F#4
F#3	F#3		F#8	F#6	F#11
F#4	F#6			F#7	F#14
F#13	F#7			F#9	F#16
F#17	F#8			F#10	F#17
	F#9			F#12	F#18
	F#10			F#13	
	F#11			F#15	
	F#12				
	F#14				
	F#15				
	F#18				

**Female with no present relationship with her father: F#3
***F#5 not included due to insufficient data on her perception of her parents' sexual attitudes